

THREE TREATISES

Tending to awaken
Secure Sinners.

viz.

1. The terror of the day of Judgement;
2 COR. 5. 10.
 2. The danger of slighting Christ and
his Gospel, MATT. 22. 5.
 3. True Christianity, or Christs absolute
Dominion, 1 COR. 6. 19, 20.
And mans necessary Self-Resignation
and Subjection unto Christ, Psa. 2.
10, 11, 12.
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By Rich. Baxter.

LONDON,

Printed by R. W. and are to be sold by
Nevil Simmons Bookseller in Ketterminster,
and by Nathaniel Ekins at the Gun
in Pauls Church Yard 1648.

~~London Printed by R. W. 1648.~~

A SERMON

of
Judgement,
Preached at *Pauls* before
the Honourable Lord Maior
and Aldermen of the City of
London, Decemb. 17. 1654.
And now enlarged

By RICH. BAXTER.

Rom. 14. 12. *Every one of you shall give account of himself to God.*

John 5. 28, 29. *The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the Resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the Resurrection of Damnation.*

LONDON

Printed by R. W. for Nevil Simmons Bookfeller in Kederminster, 1658.



T O
The Right Honourable
Christopher Pack,
Lord Maior of London, with
the Right worshipful Alder-
men.

Right Honorable,

Being desired to preach before
you at Pauls, I was faine to
preach a Sermon which I
had preached once before to a
poor ignorant Congregation
in the Country, having
little leifure for study in London. I was
glad to see that the more curious stomachs of
the Citizens did not nauseate our plain
Country Doctrine, which I seemed to discern

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in the diligent attention of the greatest Congregation that ever I saw met for such a work: But I little expected that you should have so far esteemed that discourse, as to have thought it meet for the view of the world as I understood by a Message from you, desiring it may be Printed. I readily obey your will, when it gives me the least intimation of the will of God. Its possible some others may afford it the like favourable Acceptance and entertainment. I am sure the subject is as necessary as common; and the Plainness makes it the fitter for the ignorant, who are the far greatest number, and have the greatest need. I have added the 9, 10, 11, and 12. Heads or Common places, which I did not deliver to you for want of time; and because the rest are too briefly touched (as contrived for an hours work) I have enlarged these; though making them somewhat unsutable to the rest, yet sutable to the use of those they are now intended for: The Directions also in the end are added

*Blessed be the Father of Lights, who
bath*

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hath set up so many burning and shining lights in your City, and hath watered you so plenteously with the Rivers of his Sanctuary, that you have frequent opportunities for the refreshment of your souls, to the joy of your friends, the grief of your enemies, and the glory of that Providence which hath hitherto maintained them, in despite of Persecution, Heresies and Hell! It was not alwaies so in London: It is not so in all other places, or famous Cities in the world: Nor are you sure that it will be alway so with you. It doth me good to remember what blessed Lights have shined among you, that now are more gloriously shining in a higher sphere: Preston, Sibbes, Stoughton, Taylor, Stock, Randal, Gouge, Gataker, with multitudes more that are now with Christ! It did me good to read in the Preface to Mr. Gatakers funeral Sermon, by one of your reverend and faithful Guides, what a number of sound and unanimous Labourers are yet close at work in that part of Christs Vineyard! And it did me good in that short experience and observati-

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an while I was there, to hear and see so much of their Prudence, Unity and Fidelity.

Believe it, it is the Gospel of Christ that is your Glory: and if London be more honorable then other great and famous Cities of the earth, it is the light of Gods face and the plenty and power of his ordinances and Spirit that doth advance and honour it. O know then the day of your visitation!

Three things I shall take leave to propound to your Consideration, which I am certain God requireth at your hand. The first is, that you grow in knowledge, humility, heavenliness and Unity, according to the blessed means that you enjoy. In my eyes it is the greatest shame to a people in the world, and a sign of barbarousness or blockishness, when we can hear and read what a famous, learned powerful Minister such a place, or such a place had, and yet see as much ignorance, ungodliness, unruliness and sensuality as if the Gospel had scarce ever been there. I hope it is not thus with you; but I have found it so in too many places of England.

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England. *We that never saw the faces of their Ministers, but have only read their holy Labours, have been ready to think, Sure there are few ignorant or ungodly ones in such a Congregation! Sure they are a people rich in Grace, and eminently qualified above their brethren, who have lived under such Teaching as this! At least, sure there can be none left that have an enmity to the fear of God! But when we have come to the Towns where such men spent their lives, and laid out their labours, we have found ignorant sottish worldlings, unprofitable or giddy unstable Professors, and some haters of godliness among them. O what a shame is this to them to the eyes of wise men! and what a confounding aggravation of their sin before God! Thrive therefore and be fruitful in the Vineyard of the Lord, that it may not repent him that he hath planted and watered you.*

The second is this; Improve your interest to the utmost, for the continuance of a faithful Ministry among you, and when any places

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ces are void, do what you can to get a supply of the most Able men. Your City is the Heart of the Nation: you cannot be sick but we shall all feel it. If you be infected with false Doctrines, the Countreys will ere long receive the Contagion. You have a very great influence on all the Land, for good or evil! And do you think the undermining enemies of the Church have not a special Design upon you in this point? and will not promote it as far as is in their power? Could they but get in Popish or Dividing Teachers among you, they know how many advantages they should gain at once! They would have some to grieve and trouble your faithful Guides, & hinder them in the work, and lessen that estimation which by their Unity they would obtain: And every Deceiver will hope to catch some fish, that casteth his Net among such store. We beseech you if there be Learned, Holy, Judicious men in England, that can be had for supply on such occasions, let them be yours; that you may be fed with the Best, and Guided by the Wisest, and we may have all recourse to you for
advice;

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advice; and where there are most Opposers and Seducers, there may be the most Powerful, Convincing helps, at hand; Let us in the Country have the honest raw young Preachers, and see that you have the chief Fathers and Pillars in the Church. I speak it not for your sakes alone, but because we have all Dependance on you.

The third thing which I humbly crave, is that you will Know them which Labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake; and be at peace among your selves. 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. And that you will instead of grieving or rejecting your Guides, Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you, Heb. 13. 17. 7. Encourage your Teachers, for their work is great, their spirits are weak, they are but frail men; the enemy is more industrious against them
then

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then any men; and their discouragements are very many, and the difficulties which they must encounter are very great. Especially, Obey, submit and encourage them in the work of Government and Exercise of Christs Discipline, and managing the Keys of the Kingdom which he hath put into their hand. Do you not perceive what a strait your Teachers are in! The Lord Jesus requireth them to exercise his Discipline faithfully and impartially: He giveth them not empty Titles of Rule, but layes upon them the burden of Ruling: It is his work, more then their honour that he intends: and if they will have the Honor, it must be by the work. The work is, as to Teach the ignorant, and convince the unbelieving and gain saying, so to admonish the disorderly and scandalous, and to reject and cast out of the Communion of the Church the Obstinate and Impenitent; and to set by the Leprous, that they infect not the rest; and to separate thus the precious from the vile by Christs Discipline, that dividing separation, and soul-destroying Transgressions

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ons may be prevented or cured. This work Christ hath charged upon them, and will have it done whoever is against it. If they obey him and do it, what a tumult, what clamours and discontents will they raise! How many will be ready to rise up against them with hatred and scorn! though it be the undoubted work of Christ, which even under persecution was performed by the Church-Guides. When they do but keep a scandalous untractable Sinner from the Communion of the Church in the Lords Supper, what repinings doth it raise! But, alas, this is a small part of the Discipline: If all the apparently obstinate and impenitent were cast out, what a stir would they make! And if Christ be not obeyed, what a stir will conscience make? And it is not only between Christ and men, but between men and men, that your Guides are put upon streights. The Separatists reproach them for suffering the impenitent to continue members of their Churches, and make it the pretence of their separation from them; having little to say of any moment against
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the authorized way of Government; but only against our slackness in the Execution. And if we should set to the close Exercise of it, as is meet, how would City and Country ring of it, and what Indignation should we raise in the multitude against us! O what need have your Guides of your Encouragement and best Assistance in this streight! God hath set them on a work so ungrateful and displeasing to flesh and blood, that they cannot be faithful in it, but twenty to one they will draw a world of Hatred upon themselves, if not mens fists about their ears. Festered sores will not be lancht and searcht with ease: Corrupted members are unwilling to be cut off, and cast aside: Especially if any of the great ones fall under the censure, who are big in the eyes of the world and in their own. And yet our Sovereign Lord must be obeyed; and his house must be swept, and the filth cast out, by what names or Titles soever it be dignified with men. He must be pleased, if all be displeased by it. Withdraw not your help then from this needful work. It is by the Word,

Word;

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Word, Spirit, and Ministry, that Christ the King of his Church doth Govern it: Not separatedly, but joyntly, by all three: To disobey these, is to disobey Christ: and subjection to Christ is Essential to our Christianity. This well thought on might do much to recover the Unruly that are Recoverable. You may conjecture by the strange opposition that Church-Government meets with from all sorts of carnal and corrupted minds, that there is somewhat in it that is eminently of God. I shall say no more but this, that It is an Able, Judicious, Godly, Faithful Ministry, not barely heard and applauded, but humbly and piously submitted to, and obeyed in the Lord, that must be your truest present glory, and the means of your everlasting Peace and Joy.

*So testifieth from the Lord, Your servant
in the faith of Christ,*

Rich. Baxter.



To the Ignorant or Careless Reader.

Seeing the Providence of God hath commanded forth this plain Discourse, I shall hope (upon experience of his dealing in the like cases with me) That he hath some work for it do in the world. Who knows but it was intended for the saving of thy soul, by opening thine eyes and awaking thee from thy sin, who art now in Reading of it! Be it known to thee it is the certain Truth of God, and of high concernment to thy soul that it treateth of: and therefore requireth thy most sober Consideration. Thou hast in it (how weakly soever it is managed by me) an advantage put into thy hand from God, to help thee in the greatest work in the world, even to prepare for the great approaching Judgement. In the name of God, I require thee, cast not away this advantage: Turn not away thine ears or heart from this warning that is sent to thee from
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To the Reader.

the living God! Seeing all the world cannot keep thee from judgement, nor save thee in judgement: let not all the world be able to keep thee from a speedy and serious preparation for it. Do it presently, lest God come before thou art ready! Do it seriously, lest the Tempter over-reach thee, and thou shouldst be found among the foolish self-deceivers when it is too late to do it better. I intreat this of thee on the behalf of thy soul, and as thou tenderest thy everlasting Peace with God, that thou wouldest afford these matters thy deepest Consideration. Think on them, whether they are not true and weighty: Think of them lying down and rising up. And seeing this small Book is faln into thy hands, all that I would beg of thee concerning it, is, that thou wouldest bestow now and then an hour to read it, and read it to thy family or friends as well as to thy self: and as you go, Consider what you read, and Pray the Lord to help it to thy heart, and to assist thee in the Practice, that it may not rise up in judgement against thee. If thou have not leisure at other, take now and then an hour on the Lords dayes, or at night to that purpose: and if any passage through brevity (specially neer the beginning) seem dark to thee, Read it again, and again, and ask the help of an Instructor, that thou mayest understand it. May it but help thee out of the snares

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To the Reader.

of sin, and promote the saving of thy Immortal soul, and thy comfortable appearance at the great day of Christ, I have the thing which I intended and desired. The Lord open thy Heart, and accompany his Truth with the Blessing of his Spirit ! Amen.



A

SERMON

Of Judgement,

Preached at *Fauls* before the Honourable Lord Maior and Aldermen of the City of *London*, Dec. 17. 1654.

2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. *For we must all appear before the Judgement seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terrours of the Lord we perswade men.*



It is not unlikely, that some of those wits that are taken more with things new then with things Necessary, will marvel that I choose so common a subject, and tell me that they all know this already. But I do it purposely upon these following

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Considerations. 1. Because I well know, that it is these Common Truths that are the great and necessary things which mens everlasting happiness or misery doth most depend upon. You may be ignorant of many Controversies and Inferiour points, without the danger of your souls, but so you cannot of these Fundamentals. 2. Because its apparent by the lives of men, that few know these Common Truths savingly, that think they know them. 3. Because there are several degrees of knowing the same Truths, and the best are imperfect in degree, the principal growth in knowledge that we should look after, is not to know *more* matters then we knew before, but to know *that better* and with a clearer light and firmer apprehension, which we darkly and slightly knew before. You may more safely be without *any* knowledge at all of many lower Truths, then without *some further degree* of the knowledge of those which you already know. 4. Besides it is known by sad Experience, that many perish who know the Truth, for want of the consideration of it, and making use of what they know, and so their knowledge doth but condemn them. We have as much need therefore to reach and help you to get these Truths which you know into your hearts and lives, as to tell you more. 5. And indeed, it is the impression

pression of these great and Master-Truths, wherein the vitals and essentials of Gods Image upon the soul of man doth consist: And it is these Truths that are the very Instruments of the great works that are to be done upon the heart by the Spirit and our selves. In the right use of these it is that the Principal part of the skill and holy wisdom of a Christian doth consist; and in the diligent and constant use of these lieth the life and trade of Christianity. There is nothing amiss in mens hearts or lives, but it is for want of sound knowing and believing, or well using these Fundamentals.

6. And moreover, methinks, in this choice of my subject, I may expect this advantage with the Hearers, that I may spare that labour that else would be necessary for the proof of my Doctrine: and that I may also have easier access to your hearts, and have a fuller stroak at them, and with less resistance. If I came to tell you of any thing not Common, I know not how far I might expect belief from you. You might say *These things are uncertain to us, or all men are not of this mind.* But when every Hearer confesseth the truth of my doctrine, and no man can deny it, without denying Christianity it self, I hope I may expect that your hearts should the sooner receive the impression of this Doctrine, and the sooner yield to the duties which

it directs you to: and the easier let go the sins which from so certain a Truth shall be discovered.

The words of my text, are the reason which the Apostle giveth both of his perswading other men to the fear of God, and his care to approve to God his own heart and life. They contain the Assertion and Description of the great Judgement, and one Use which he makes of it. It assureth us, that Judged we *must be*, and *who* must be so Judged, and *by whom*, and *about what*, and *on what terms*, and *to what end*.

The meaning of the words, so far as is necessary, I shall give you briefly. *We all*, both we Apostles that Preach the Gospel, and you that hear it, *must*, willing or unwilling, there is no avoiding it, *Appear*, stand forth or make your appearance, and there have your hearts and ways laid open, and appear as well as we. *Before the Judgement seat of Christ*; i. e. before the Redeemer of the world, to be Judged by him as our Rightful Lord. *That every one*, even of all mankind which are, were, or shall be, without exception; *May receive*, that is, may receive his sentence adjudging him to his due; and then may receive the execution of the sentence; and may go away from the barr with that Reward or Punishment that is his due according to the Law by which he is Judged. *The things done in his body,*

body, that is, the due Reward of the works done in his body; or as some copies read it, *The things proper to the body*. i. e. due to the man, even body as well as soul. *According to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad*: i. e. This is the caule to be tried and Judged, whether men have done well or ill, whiles they were in the flesh; and what is due to them according to their deeds. *Knowing therefore, &c. i. e.* Being certain therefore that these things are so, and that such a Terrible Judgement of Christ will come, we perswade men to become Christians, and live as such, that they may then speed well, when others shall be destroyed; or as others, *Knowing the fear of the Lord*, that is the true Religion, we perswade men.

Doct. 1. There will be a Judgement. *Doct. 2.* Christ will be the Judge. *Doct. 3.* All men shall there appear. *Doct. 4.* Men shall be then Judged according to the works that they did in the flesh, whether good or evil. *Doct. 5.* The end of Judgement is, that men may receive their final due by Sentence and Execution. *Doct. 6.* The knowledge and consideration of the terrible Judgement of God, should move us to perswade, and men to be perswaded to carefull preparation.

The ordinary method for the handling of this subject of Judgement should be this. 1. To

shew you what Judgement is in the General, and what it doth contain : and that is, 1. The persons. 2. The cause. 3. The Actions. 1. The parties are, 1. the Accuser. 2. the Defendant. 3. Sometime Assistants. 4. The Judge. 2. The cause contains, 1. The Accusation. 2. The Defence. 3. With the Evidence of both. 4. And the Merit. The merit of the cause is as it agreeth with the Law and Equity. 3. The Judicial Actions are, I. Introductory. 1. Citation. 2. Compulsion if need be. 3. Appearance of the Accused. II. Of the Essence of Judgement, 1. Debate by 1. the Accuser. 2. Defendant, called the Disputation of the cause. 2. By the Judge. 1. Exploration. 2. Sentence. 3. To see to the execution : But because this Method is less suitable to your capacities, and hath something humane, I will reduce all to these following heads.

1. I will shew what Judgement is.
2. Who is the Judge : and why.
3. Who must be Judged.
4. Who is the Accuser.
5. How the citation, constraint and appearance will be.
6. What is the Law by which men shall be judged.
7. What will be the cause of the day : what the Accusation, and what must be the just Defence.
8. What will be the Evidence.

9. What

9. What are those frivolous insufficient excuses by which the unrighteous may think to escape.

10. What will be the sentence : who shall *dye*, and who shall *live* ; and what the Reward and Punishment is.

11. What are the Properties of the Sentence.

12. What and by whom the execution will be. In these particular heads we contain the whole Doctrine of this Judgement, and in this more familiar method shall handle it.

I. **F**OR the first, Judgement, as taken *largely*, comprehendeth all the forementioned particulars ; As taken more *strictly* for the Act of the Judge, it is *the trial of a Controverted case*. In our case note these things following.

1. Gods Judgement is not intended for any Discovery to himself of what he knows not already : he knows already that all men are : and what they have done : and what is their due : But it is to discover to others and to men themselves the ground of his sentence, that so his Judgement may attain its end : for the gloryfying his grace on the Righteous, and for the

the convincing the wicked of their sin and desert, and to shew to all the world the Righteousness of the Judge, and of his Sentence and Execution,, *Rom. 3.4, 26. and Rom. 2.2.*

2. It is not a Controversie therefore undecided in the mind of God, that is there to be decided, but onely one that is undecided as to the knowledge and mind of creatures.

3. Yet is not this Judgement *a bare Declaration*, but *a Decision*, and so *a Declaration* thereupon: the cause will be then put out of controversy, and all further expectation of Decision be at an end ; and with the justified there will be no more Accusation, and with the condemned no more hope for ever.

II. **F**OR the second thing, who shall be the Judge ; I answer, The Judge is *God himself by Jesus Christ.*

1. Principally, God as Creator.

2. As also, God as Redemer, the humane nature of Jesus Christ having a derived subordinate power. God lost not his right to his creature either by mans fall, or the Redemption by Christ, but by the latter hath a new further right : but it is in and by Christ that God Judgeth : For as *meer Creator of innocent man*, God judgeth.

judgeth none, but hath committed all judgement to the Son, who hath procured this right by the redeeming of fallen man, *John* 5. 22. But as the Son only doth it in the neereſt ſenſe, ſo the Father as Creator doth it remotely and principally.

1. In that the power of the Son is derived from the Father, and ſo ſtandeth in ſubordination to him as Fountain or Efficient.

2. In that the Judgement of the Son (as alſo his whole Mediatorſhip) is to bring men to God their maker as their ultimate end, and recover them to him from whom they are faln, and ſo as a means to that end, the Judgement of the Son is ſubordinate to the Father.

From hence you may ſee theſe following Truths worthy your conſideration.

1. That all men are Gods creatures, and none are the workmanſhip of themſelves or any other ; or elſe the Creator ſhould not Judge them on that right.

2. That Chriſt dyed for All, and is the Redeemer of the world, and a ſacrifice for All, or elſe he ſhould not Judge them on that Right. For he will not Judge wicked men as he will do the Devils, as the *meer enemies* of his Redeemed ones, but as being themſelves his ſubjects in the world, and being bought by him, and therefore become his own, who ought to have

have glorified him that bought them, 2 *Cor.* 5: 14, 15. 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. 1 *John.* 2. 2. *Heb.* 2. 9. 1 *Tim.* 2. 6. 7.

3. Hence it appeareth that all men were under some Law of grace, and did partake of some of the Redeemers mercy. Though the Gospell came not to all, yet all had that mercy which could come from no other Fountain but his Blood, and which should have brought them neerer to Christ then they were, (though it were not sufficient to bring them to believe :) and which should have led them to Repentance. *Rom* 2. 4. For the neglecting of which they justly perish; and not *meerly* for sinning against the law that was given man in innocency: Were that so, Christ would not Judge them as Redeemer, and that for the abuse or not-improvement of his Talents, as he tels us he will do, *Mat.* 25. *per totum.*

4. If God will be the Judge, then none can expect by any shifts or indirect means to scape at that day. For how should it be?

1. It is not possible that any should keep out of sight, or hide their sin and the evill of their actions, and so delude the Judge: God will not be mocked now, nor deceived then, *Gal.* 6. 7. they grossly deceive themselves that imagine any such thing: God must be Omniscient and All-seeing, or he cannot be God. Should you

you hide your cause from men and from Devils, and be ignorant of it your selves, yet cannot you hide it from God. Never did there a thought pass thy heart, or a word pass thy mouth, which God was not acquainted with : and as he knows them, so doth he observe them. He is not as Imperfect man, taken up with other business, so that he cannot mind *All*. As easie is it with him to observe every Thought, or Word, or Action of thine, as if he had but *that one* in the world to observe : and as easie to observe each particular sinner, as if he had not another creature to look after in the world. He is a fool indeed that thinks now that God takes no notice of him, *Ezek. 8. 12.* and *9. 9.* or, that thinketh then to escape in the croud : He that found out one Guest that had not on a wedding Garment, *Mat. 22. 12.* will then find out every unholy soul, and give him so sad a salutation as shall make him speechless. *Job 11. 11.* *For he knoweth vain man ; he seeth wickedness also, and will be not consider it ?*

2. It is not possible that any should scape at that Day by any Tricks of wit and false Reasoning in their own Defence. God knoweth a sound Answer from an unsound, and a Truth from a Lye. Righteousness may be perverted here on earth, by out-witting the Judge ; but so will it not be then ; To hope any of this, is
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to hope that God will not be God. It is in vain then for the *unholy* man to say he is *holy*; or for any sinner to deny, or excuse, or extenuate his sin: To bring forth the counterfeit of any Grace, and plead with God any shels of hypocritical performances, and to think to prove a Title to heaven by any thing short of Gods Condition, all these will be vain attempts.

3. And as impossible will it prove by fraud or flattery, by perswasion or bribery, or by any other means, to pervert Justice by turning the mind of God who is the Judge: fraud and flattery, bribery and importunity may do much with weak men; but with God they will do nothing. Were he changeable and partial, he were not God.

4. If God be Judge, you may see the Cavils of Infidels are foolish, when they ask, *How long will God be in Trying and Judging so many persons, and taking an account of so many Words, and Thoughts and Deeds? Sure it will be a long time, and a difficult work.* As if God were as man, that knoweth not things till he seek out their Evidence by particular signs. Let these fools understand, if they have any understanding, that the infinite God can shew to every man at once, all the thoughts, and words, and actions that ever he hath been guilty of. And in the twink of an eye, even at one view,
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can make all the world to see their ways and their deservings, Causing their Consciences and Memories to present them all before them in such a sort as shall be equivalent to a verbal debate. *Psal. 50. 21, 22.* he will set them in order before them.

5. If Jesus Christ be the Judge, then what a comfort must it needs be to his members, that he shall be Judge that loved them to the death, and whom they loved above their lives, and he who was their Rock of hope and strength, and the desire and delight of their souls!

6. And if Jesus Christ must be the Judge, what confusion will it bring to the faces of his enemies, and of all that set light by him in the day of their visitation? to see Mercy turned against them, and he that dyed for them, now ready to condemn them: and that blood and grace which did Aggravate their sin, to be pleaded against them, to the increase of their misery: how sad will this be!

7. If the God of Love, and Grace and Truth, be Judge, then no man need to fear any wrong. No subtilty of the Accuser, nor darkness of Evidence: no prejudice or partiality, or what soever else may be imagined, can there appear to the wrong of your cause. Get a good cause and fear nothing: and if your cause be bad, nothing can deliver you.

III. FOR

III. **F**OR the Third Point, *Who are they that must be judged?*

Answ. All the rational Creatures in this lower world. And it seems, Angels also, either *all*, or *some* : But because their case is more darkly made known to us, and less concerns us, we will pass it by. Every man that hath been made or born on earth (except Christ, who is God and man, and is the Judge) must be judged. If any foolish Infidels shall say, *Where shall so great a number stand?* I answer him, That he knoweth not the things invisible; either the nature of Spirits and spiritual bodies, nor what place containeth them, or *how*; but easily he may know that he that gave them all a being, can sustain them all, and have room for them all, and can at once disclose the thoughts of all, as I said before.

The first in Order to be judged, are, the Saints, *Mat. 25.* and then with Christ they shall judge the rest of the World, *1 Cor. 6, 2, 3.* not in an equal authority and commission with Christ, but as the present Approvers of his Righteous Judgement. The Princes of the earth shall stand then before Christ, even as the Peasants; and the honourable as the base; the rich
and

and the poor shall meet together, and the Lord shall judge them all, *Prov. 22. 2.* No men shall be excused from standing at that Bar, and giving up their account, and receiving their doom. Learned and unlearned, young and old, godly, and ungodly, all must stand there. I know some have vainly imagined, that the righteous shall not have any of their sins mentioned, but their graces and duties only ; but they consider not, that things will not then be transacted by words as we do now, but by cleer discoveries by the infinite Light ; and that if God should not discover to them their sins, he would not discover the Riches of his Grace in the pardon of all these sins : even then they must be humbled in themselves, that they may be glorified, and for ever cry, Not unto us Lord, but unto thy name be the glory.

I V. **F**OR the Fourth Particular, *Who will be the Accuser ?*

Ans. 1. Satan is called in Scripture the Accuser of the Brethren, *Revel. 12. 10.* and we find in *Job 1.* and other places, that now he doth Practise it even before God : and therefore we judge it probable that he will do so then. But we would determine of no-

thing that Scripture hath not clearly determined.

2. Conscience will be an Accuser, though especially of the wicked, yet in some sence of the righteous : for it will tell the truth to all : and therefore so far as men are faulty, it will tell them of their faults. The wicked it will accuse of unpardoned sin, and of sin unrepented of ; the godly only of sin repented of and pardoned. It will be a Glas wherein every man may see the face of his heart and former Life, *Rom. 1. 15.*

3. The Judge himself will be the Principal Accuser ; for it is he that is wronged, and he that prosecutes the cause, and will do justice on the wicked : God judgeth even the righteous themselves to be sinners, or else they could not be pardoned sinners. But he judgeth the wicked to be impenitent, unbelieving, unconverted sinners. Remember what I said before, that it is not a verbal accusation, but an opening of the truth of the cause to the view of our selves and others, that God will then perform.

Nor can any think it unworthy of God to be mens Accuser by such a disclosure, it being no dishonour to the purest light to reveal a dung-hill, or to the greatest Prince to accuse a Traytor. Nor is it unmeet that God should be both Accuser and Judge ; seeing he is both absolute
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Lord, and perfectly just, and so far beyond all suspicion of Injustice. His Law also doth virtually accuse, *Job. 5. 45.* but of this by it self.

V. **F**OR the Fifth Particular, *How will the sinners be called to the Bar?*

Answ. God will not stand to send them a Citation, nor require him to make his voluntary Appearance: but willing or unwilling, he will bring them in.

1. Before each mans particular Judgement, he sendeth Death to call away his soul, a surly Serjeant, that will have no Nay: How dear so ever this world may be to men, and how loth so ever they are to depart, away they must, and come before the Lord that made them; Death will not be bribed. Every man that was set in the vineyard in the morning of their lives, must be called out at evening to Receive according to what he hath done: then must the naked soul alone appear before its Judge and be accomptible for all that was done in the body: and be sent before till the final judgement to remain in happiness or misery, till the body be raised again, and joyned to it.

In this appearance of the soul before God, it seemeth by Scripture, that there is some Mini-

stry of Angels ; for *Luke* 16. 22. it is said that the Angels carried *Lazarus*, that is, his soul, into *Abrahams* bosom. What local motion there is, or situation of souls, is no fit matter for the enquiry of Mortals : and what it is in this that the Angels will do, we cannot clearly understand as yet ; but most certain it is, that as soon as ever the soul is out of the body, it comes to its account before the God of Spirits.

2. At the end of the world the bodies of all men shall be raised from the earth, and joyned again to their souls ; and the soul and body shall be judged to their endless state ; and this is the great and general Judgement, where all men shall at once appear. The same power of God that made men of nothing, will as easily then new-make them by a Resurrection ; by which he will add much more perfection, even to the wicked in their Naturals, which will make them capable of the greater misery ; even they shall have immortal and incorruptible bodies, which may be the subjects of immortal woe, *1 Cor.* 15. 53. *John* 5. 28, 29.

Of this Resurrection, and our Appearance at Judgement, the Angels will be some way the Ministers : as they shall come with Christ to Judgement so they shall sound his Trumpet, *1 Thes.* 4. 16. and they shall gather the wicked
out

out of Gods Kingdom; and they shall gather the Tares to burn them, *Matth. 13. 39 40, 41.* in the end of the world the Angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the Furnace of fire, *Mat. 17. 49. 50.*

FOR the sixth particular, *What Law is it that men shall be judged by?*

Ans. That which was given them to live by: Gods Law is but *the sign of his will, to teach us what shall be due from us and to us*; before we fell he gave us such a Law as was suitable to our perfection; when we had sinned and turned from him, as we ceased not to be his creatures, nor he to be our Lord, so he destroyed not his Law, nor discharged or absolved us from the duty of our obedience. But because we stood condemned by that Law, and could not be Justified by it, having once Transgressed it, he was pleased to make a *Law of Grace, even a new, a remedying Law*, by which we might be saved from the deserved punishment of the Old. So we shall be tryed at Judgement upon *both* these Laws, but ultimately upon the Last. The first Law commanded perfect Obedience, and threat-

ned Death to us if ever we disobeyed ; the second Law finding us under the Guilt of sin against the first, doth command us to Repent and Believe in Christ, and so to return to God by him ; and promiseth us pardon of all our sins upon that Condition, and also if we persevere, everlasting Glory. So that in Judgement though it must be first evinced that we are sinners, and have deserved Death according to the Law of pure nature ; yet that is not the upshot of the Judgement. For the enquiry will be next, whether we have accepted the remedy, and so obeyed the Law of grace, and performed its Condition for pardon and salvation ; and upon this our Life or Death will depend. It is both these Laws that condemn the wicked ; but it is only the Law of grace that justifieth the righteous.

Obj. But how shall Heathens be judged by the Law of grace, that never did receive it ?

Answ. The expresse Gospel some of them had not, and therefore shall not directly be judged by it ; but much of the Redeemers mercy they did enjoy, which should have led them to repent, and seek out after Recovery from their misery, and to come nearer Christ ; and for the neglect and abuse of this, they shall be judged : and not meerly for sinning against the Law that was given us in pure innocency : so that
Christ

Christ as Redeemer shall judge them as well as others : though they had but one Talent, yet must they give an account of that to the Redeemer, from whom they received it. But if any be unsatisfied in this, let them remember, that as God hath left the state of such more dark to us, and the terms on which he will judge them ; so doth it much more concern us to look to the terms of our own Judgement.

Obj. But how shall infants be judged by the Gospel, that were incapable of it ?

Ans. For ought I find in Scripture, they stand or fall with their parents, and on the same terms ; but I leave each to their own thoughts.

V II. **F**OR the seventh head, *What will be the cause of the day to be enquired after ? what the Accusation, and what the Defence ?*

Ans. This may be gathered from what was last said. The great cause of the day will be to enquire and determine who shall die, and who shall live ; who ought to go to heaven, and who to hell for ever, according to the Law by which they must then be judged.

I. As there is a twofold Law by which they must be judged, so will there then be a two-

fold Accusation. The first will be, that they were *sinners*, and so having violated the Law of God, they Deserve Everlasting Death, according to that Law : If no defence could be made, this one Accusation would condemn all the world ; for it is most certain that all are sinners, and as certain that all sin deserveth Death. The only defence against this Accusation lyeth in this Plea; Confessing the charge, we must plead that Christ hath satisfied for sins, and upon that consideration God hath forgiven us; and therefore being forgiven, we ought not to be punished ; To prove this we must shew the pardon under Gods hand in the Gospel. But because this pardoning Act of the Gospel doth forgive none but those that Repent and believe, and so return to God, and to sincere Obedience for the time to come ; therefore the next Accusation will be, that *we did not perform these Conditions of forgiveness ; and therefore being Unbelievers, Impenitent and Rebels against the Redeemer, we have no right to pardon, but by the sentence of the Gospel, are lyable to a greater punishment for this contempt of Christ and Grace.* This Accusation is either true or false : where it is true, God and Conscience, who speak the truth, may well be said to be the Accusers : Where it is false, it can be only the work of Satan the malicious adversary who,

who, as we may see in *Jobs* case, will not stick to bring a false Accusation.

If any think that the Accuser will not do so vain a work, at least they may see that *potentially* this is the Accusation that lyeth against us, and which we must be justified against. For all *Justification* implyeth an *Actual* or *Potential* *Accusation*.

He that is truly accused of final Impenitency, or Unbelief, or Rebellion, hath no other Defence to make; but must needs be condemned.

He that is falsely accused of such non-performance of the condition of Grace, must deny the Accusation, and plead his own personal Righteousness as against that Accusation; and produce that Faith, Repentance and sincere Obedience and Perseverance by which he fulfilled that Condition, and so is *Evangelically Righteous* in himself, and therefore hath part in the blood of Christ, which is instead of a *Legal righteousness* to him, in all things else, as having procured him a pardon of all his sin, and aright to everlasting glory.

And thus we must then be Justified by Christs satisfaction only, against the accusation of being *sinners in general*, and of deserving Gods wrath for the Breach of the Law of works: But we must be justified by our faith,
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repentance and sincere Obedience it self, against the Accusation of being *Impenitent, Unbelievers, and Rebels against Christ*, and having not performed the Condition of the promise, and so having no part in Christ and his Benefits.

So that in Summ you see, that the cause of the day will be to enquire, Whether, being all known sinners, we have accepted of Christ upon his terms, and so have right in him and his benefits, or not? Whether they have forsaken this vain world for him, and loved him so faithfully, that they have manifested it, in parting with these things at his Command? And this is the meaning of *Mat. 25*. Where the enquiry is made to be, whether they have fed and visited him in his members, or not? That is, whether they have so far loved him as their Redeemer, and God by him, as that they have manifested this to his members according to Opportunity, though it cost them the hazzard or loss of all: Seeing danger, and labour, and cost, are fitter to express love by, then Empty Complements and bare Professions.

Whether it be particularly enquired after, or only taken for granted that men are *sinners*, and have deserved Death according to the *Law of works*, and that Christ hath satisfied
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by his death, is all one as to the matter in hand, seeing Gods enquiry is but the Discovery and Conviction of us. But the last Question, which must decide the Controversie, will be, whether we have performed the condition of the Gospel?

I have the rather also said all this, to shew you in what sense these words are taken in the text, that *Every man shall be judged according to what he hath done in the flesh, whether it be good or bad.* Though every man be Judged *worthy* of Death for sinning, yet every man shall not be Judged *to dye* for it: and no man shall be Judged *worthy* of Life for his good works: It is therefore according to the Gospel, as the rule of judgement, that this is meant. They that have Repented and believed, and returned to *true*, though *imperfect* Obedience, shall be Judged to everlasting Life, according to these works; not because these works *Deserve* it, but because the *free Gift in the Gospel* through the blood of Christ, doth make these things the *condition* of our possessing it. They that have lived and dyed Impenitent Unbelievers and Rebels against Christ; shall be judged to everlasting punishment, *because* they have *deserved* it both by their sin in *general* against the Law, and by these sins in *special* against the Gospel. This is called the *decree of the Cause,*

Cause, that is, what is a mans *due* according to the true meaning of the Law ; Though the due may be by free gift. And thus you see what will be the cause of the Day, and the matter to be enquired after and decided, as to our Life or Death.

V I I I. **T**H E next point in our method, is, to shew you, *What will be the Evidence of the Cause ?*

Answ. There is a fivefold Evidence among men. 1. When the fact is notorious. 2. The knowledge of an unsuspected Competent Judg. 3. The parties Confession. 4. Witness. 5. Instruments and visible effects of the action. All these Evidences will be at hand, and any one of them sufficient for the conviction of the guilty person at that day.

1. As the sins of *all men* ; so the *Impenitency* and *Rebellion* of the *wicked* was notorious, or at least will be then. For though some play the hypocrites, and hide the matter from the world and themselves, yet God shall open their hearts and former lives to themselves, and to the view of all the world. He shall set their sins in order before them so, that it shall be utterly in vain to deny or excuse them. If any men will then think to make their cause as good to God as they can now do to us, that are not able to see their

their hearts, they will be foully mistaken. Now they can say they have as good hearts as the best: then God will bring them out in the light; and shew them to themselves and all the world, whether they were good or bad. Now they will face us down that they do truly Repent, and they obey God as well as they can; but God that knoweth the Deceivers, will then undeceive them. We cannot now make men acquainted with their own unsanctified hearts, nor convince them that have not true Faith, Repentance or Obedience, but God will convince them of it; They can find shifts and false answers to put off a *Minister* with; but *God* will not so be shifted off. Let us preach as plainly to them as we can, and do all that ever we are able to acquaint them with the impenitency and unholiness of their own heart, and the necessity of a new heart and life, yet we cannot do it; but they will Believe whether we will or not, that the old heart will serve the turn? But how easily will *God* make them know the contrary? We plead with them in the dark; for though we have the candle of the Gospel in our hands when we come to shew them their corruption, yet they shut their eyes, and are wilfully blind; But *God* will open their eyes whether they will or not, not by *holy Illumination*, but by *forced conviction*; and then he will plead with them as in the open light. See
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here thy own unholy soul ; canst thou now say thou didst love me above all ? canst thou deny but thou didst love this world before me ? and serve thy flesh and lusts, though I told thee if thou didst so thou shouldst dye ? Look upon thy own heart now, and see whether it be an holy or an unholy heart ; a spiritual or a fleshly heart ; a heavenly or an earthly heart ? Look now upon all the course of thy life, and see whether thou didst live to me, or to the world and thy flesh ? Oh how easily will God convince men then of the very sins of their thoughts, and in their secret Closets, when they thought that no witness could have disclosed them ! Therefore its said that the Books shall be opened, and the dead Judged out of the books, Revel. 20. 12. Dan. 7. 10.

The second Evidence will be the knowledge of the Judge. If the sinner would not be convinced ; yet it is sufficient that the Judge knoweth the Cause ; God needeth no further witness ; he saw thee committing adultery in secret, lying, stealing forswearing in secret. If thou do not know thy own heart to be unholy, it is enough that God knoweth it. If you have the face to say, Lord, when did we see thee hungry ? &c. Mat. 25. 44. yet God will make good the charge against thee, and there needeth no more Testimony then his own. Can foolish sinners think to lie hid or escape at that day, that will now sin wilfully

wilfully before their Judge? that know every day that their *Judge* is *looking* on them while they forget him, and give up themselves to the world, and yet go on even under his eye, as if to his face they dared him to punish them?

3. The third Evidence will be, *the sinners Confession*. God will force their own Consciences to witness against them, and their own tongues to confess the Accusation. If they do at first excuse it, he will leave them speechless, yea and condemning themselves before they have done.

Oh what a difference between their language now and then ! *Now* we cannot tell them of their sin and misery, but they either tell us of our own faults, or bid us look to ourselves, or deny or excuse their fault, or make light of it: but *then* their own tongues shall confess them, and cry out of the wilful folly that they committed, and lay a heavier charge upon them then we can now do. *Now* if we tell them that we are afraid they are unregenerate, and least their hearts are not truly set upon God; they will tell us they hope to be saved with such hearts as they have: But *then*, Oh how they will confess the folly and falseness of their own hearts ! You may see a little of their case even in despairing sinners on earth, how far they are from denying or excu-
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sing their sins. *Judas cries out, I have sinned in betraying Innocent blood, Mat. 27. 4.* out of their own mouth shall they be Judged. That very tongue that now excuseth their sin, will in their torments be their great Accuser. For God will have it so to be.

4. The fourth Evidence will be the *witness of others*. Oh how many thousand witnesses might there be produced, were there need to convince the guilty soul at that day !

1. All the Ministers of Christ that ever preached to them, or warned them, will be sufficient witnesses against them : *we must needs* testifie that we preached to them the truth of the Gospel, and they would not believe it. We preached to them the goodness of God, yet they set not their hearts upon him : we shewed them their sin, and they were not humbled. We told them of the danger of an unregenerate state, and they did not regard us : we acquainted them with the Absolute Necessity of holiness, but they made light of all : We let them know the deceitfulness of their hearts, and the need of a close and faithful examination, but they would not bestow an hour in such a work ; nor scarce once be afraid of being mistaken and miscarrying. We let them know the vanity of this world, and yet they would not forsake it no not for Christ and the hopes
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of glory : we told them of the everlasting felicity they might attain, but they would not set themselves to seek it.

What we shal think of it *then*, the Lord knows; but surely it seemeth *now* to us a matter of very sad consideration, that we must be brought in as witnesses against the souls of our neighbours and friends in the flesh. Those whom we now unfeignedly love, and would do any thing that we were able to do for their good, whose welfare is dearer to us then all worldly enjoyments; Alas, that we must be forced to testifie to their faces for their condemnation ! Ah Lord, with what a heart must a poor Minister study, when he considereth this, that all the words that he is studying must be brought in for a witness against many of his hearers ! with what an heart must a Minister Preach, when he remembereth that all the words that he is speaking must condemn many, if not most of his hearers ? Do we desire this sad fruit of our Labours ? No , we may say with the Prophet, *Jer.* 17.16. *I have not desired the woful day, thou knowest* : No, if we desired it, we would not do so much to prevent it : we would not study, and preach, and pray, and intreat men, that if it were possible we might not be put on such a task. And doubtless it should make every honest Minister study hard, and pray hard, and

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intreat hard, and stoop low to men, and be earnest with men in season and out of season, that if it may be, they may not be the condemners of their peoples souls. But if men will not hear, and there be no remedy, who can help it? Christ himself came not into the world to condemn men, but to save them, and yet he will condemn those that will not yield to his saving work: God takes no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he repent, and return, and live, *Ezek.* 18. 23, 32. and yet he will rejoyce over those to do them hurt, and destroy them that will not return, *Dent.* 28. 63. And if we must be put on such a work, he will make us like-minded. The Holy Ghost tels us, that the Saints shall Judge the world, *1 Cor.* 6. 2, 3. and if they must Judge, they will Judge as God Judgeth; you cannot blame us for it sinners: we now warn you of it before hand, and if you will not prevent it, blame not us, but your selves. Alas! we are not our own Masters. As we now speak not to you in our own names, so then we may not do what we list our selves, or if we might, our wills will be as Gods will. God will make us Judge you, and witness against you; Can we absolve you, when the righteous God will condemn you? when God is against you, whose side would you have us be of? We must be either against God or you:

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And can you think that we should be for any one against our Maker and Redeemer ? We must either condemn the Sentence of Jesus Christ, or condemn you : and is not there more reason to condemn you then him ? can we have any mercy on you, when he that made you will not save you, and he that formed you, will shew you no mercy ? *Isa. 27. 11.* yea when he that dyed for you, will condemn you, shall we be more merciful then God ? But alas ! if we should be so foolish and unjust, what good would it do you ? If we would be false witnesses and partial Judges, it would not save you ; we are not Justified if we absolve our selves, *1 Cor. 4. 4.* how unable then shall we be against Gods Sentence to justifie you ? if all the world should say, you were holy and penitent, when God knows you were unholy and impenitent, it will do you no good. You pray every day that *his will* may be done, and it will be done : It will be done *upon* you, because it was not done *by* you. What would you have *us* say, if God ask us, *Did you tell this sinner of the need of Christ, of the glory of the world to come, and the vanity of this ?* Should we lye, and say we did not ? what should we say if he ask us, *Did not you tell them the misery of their natural state ; and what would become of them if they were not made new ?* Would you have us lye

to God, and say we did not ? Why, if we *did not*, your blood will be required at our hands, *Ezekiel 33.6. and 3.18.* and would you have us bring your blood upon our own heads by a lye ? Yea, and to do you no good, when we know that lyes will not prevail with God ? No, no, sinners ; we must unavoidably testifye to the confusion of your face ; if God ask us, we must bear witness against you and say, *Lord, we did what we could according to our weak abilities, to reclaim them : Indeed our own thoughts of everlasting things were so low, and our hearts so dull, that we must confess we did not follow them so close, nor speak so earnestly as we should have done : we did not cry so loud, or lift up our voice as a Trumpet to awaken them (Isa. 58. 1.) we confess we did not speak to them with such melting compassion, and with such streams of tears beseech them to regard, as a matter of such great concernment should have been spoken with ; we did not fall on our knees to them, and so earnestly beg of them for the Lords sake, to have mercy upon their own souls, as we should have done. But yet we told them the Message of God ; and we studied to speak it to them as plainly and as piercingly as we could. Fain we would have convinced them of their sin and misery, but we could not : fain we would have drawn them to the*
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admiration of Christ, but they made light of it, Mat. 22. 5. We would fain have brought them to the contempt of this vain world and to set their mind on the world to come, but we could not; ~~Some~~ compassion thou knowest Lord we had to their souls; many a weeping or groaning hour we have had in secret; because they would not hear and obey; and some sad complaints we have made over them in pulick: We told them that they must shortly dye and come to Judgement, and that this world would deceive them, and leave them in the dust: we told them that the time was at hand when nothing but Christ would do them good, and nothing but the favour of God would be sufficient for their happiness: but we could never get them to lay it to heart. Many a time did we intreat them to think soberly of this life, and the life to come, and to compare them together with the Faith of Christians and the reason of men: but they would not do it: many a time did we intreat them but to take now and then an hour in secret to consider who made them, and for what he had made them, and why they were sent into this world and what their business here is: and whether they are going, and how it will go with them at their later end: But we could never get most of them to spend one hour in serious thoughts of these weighty matters. Many a time did we intreat them to try whether they were Regenerate or not?

whether Christ and his Spirit were in them, or not? Whether their souls were brought back to God by Sanctification? but they would not try: We did beseech them to make sure work, and not leave such a matter as everlasting Joy or Torment to a bold and mad adventure; but we could not prevail. We intreated them to lay all other businesses aside a little while in the world, and to enquire by the direction of the word of God, what would become of them in the world to come; and to Judge themselves before God came to Judge them, seeing they had the Law and rule of Judgment before them; but their minds were blinded and their hearts were hardened, and the profit, and pleasure, and honour of this world did either stop their ears, or quickly steal away their hearts, so that we could never get them to a sober consideration, nor ever win their hearts to God.

This will be the witness that many a hundred Ministers of the Gospel must give in against the souls of their people at that day. Alas, that ever you should cast this upon us! For the Lords sake Sirs, pitty your poor Teachers if you pitty not your selves. We had rather go a 1000. miles for you; we had rather be scorned and abused for your sakes: we had rather lay our hands under your feet, and beseech you on our knees with tears, were we able, then be put on such a work as this. It
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is ~~you~~ that will do it if it be done. We had rather follow you from house to house, and teach and exhort you, if you will but hear us, and accept of our exhortation. Your souls are pretious in our eyes; for we know they were so in the eyes of Christ, and therefore we are loth to see this day; we were once in your case, and therefore know what it isto be blind, and careless, and carnal as you are, and therefore would fain obtain your Deliverance. But if you *will* not hear, but we *must* accuse you, and we *must* condemn you; The Lord Judge between you & us. For we can witness that it was full fore against our wills. We have been faulty indeed in doing no more for you, and not following you with restless Importunity; (the Good Lord forgive us;) but yet we have not betrayed you by silence.

2. All those that fear God, that have lived among ungodly men, will also be sufficient witnesses against them. Alas! they must be put upon the same work, which is very unpleasant to their thoughts, as Ministers are: They must witness before the Lord, that they did as friends and neighbours admonish them: that they gave them a good example, and endeavoured to walke in holiness before them; but alas! the most did but mock them, and call them Puritans and precise fools, and they made more ado then needs for their salvation: They must be

forced to testifie, [Lord we would fain have drawn them with us to hear the word and to read it, and to pray in their families, and to sanctifie the holy day, and take such happy Opportunities for their souls; But we could not get them to it; we did in our places what we were able to give them the example of a Godly Conversation, and they did but deride us; they were readier to mark every slip of our lives and to observe all our Infirmities, and catch at any Accusation that was against us, then to follow us in any work of holy obedience, or care for our everlasting peace;] The Lord knows it is a most heavy thing to consider now, that poor neighbours must be fain to come in against those they love so dearly, and by their Testimony to Judge them to perdition. Oh heavy case to think of, that a master must witness against his own servant! Yea a husband against his own wife, and a wife against her husband; yea parents against their own children, and say; [Lord, I taught them thy word but they would not learn: I told them what would come on it, if they returned not to thee; I brought them to Sermons, and I prayed with them and for them. I frequently minded them of these everlasting things, and of this dreadfull day which they now see. But youthful lusts and the temptations of the flesh and the Devil

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led them away, and I could never get them throughly and soundly to lay it to their hearts.] Oh you that are parents, and friends, and neighbours, in the fear of God bestir you now that you may not be put to this at that day of Judgement. Oh give them no rest, take no nay of them till you have perswaved their hearts from this world to God, lest you be put to be their condemners: It must be *now* that you must prevent it, or else *never*; *now* while you are with them, while you and they are in the flesh together, which will be but a little while: Can you but now prevail with them, all will be well, and you may meet them Joyfully before the Lord.

3. Another witness that will testifie against the ungodly at that day, will be their sinful companions: those that drew them into sin, or were drawn by them, or joyned with them in it. Oh little do poor drunkards think, when they sit merrily in an Ale-house, that one of them must bear witness against another and condemn one another: If they thought of this, me thinks it should make them have less delight in that company: Those that now joyn with you in wickedness, shall then be forced to witness, [I confess Lord, I did hear him swear and curse; I heard him deride those that feared the Lord, and make a jest of a holy life: I saw him in the Ale-house when he should be hear-
ing.

ing the Word of God, or reading, or calling upon God, and preparing for this day : I joyned with him in fleshly delights, in abusing thy creature and our own bodies.] Sinners, look your companions in the face the next time you are with them, and remember this that I now say ; that those men shall give in Evidence against you, that now are your associates in all your mirth ; Little thinketh the fornicator and lustful wanton, that their sinful mates must then bear witness of that which they thought the dark had concealed, and tell their shame before all the world. But this must be the fruit of sin. Its meet that they who encouraged one another in sin, should condemn one another for it. And marvail not at it ; for they shall be forced to it whether they will or no ; Light will not then be hid : They may think to have some ease to their consciences, by accusing and condemning others. When *Adam* is questioned for his sin, he presently accuseth the woman, *Gen. 3. 12.* when *Judas* his conscience was awakened, he runs to the Pharisees with the money that drew him to it, and they cast it back in his own face, *See thou to it, what is that to us ? Mat. 27. 4, 5, 6.* Oh the cold comfort that sinners will have at that day ! and the little pleasure that they will find in remembering their evil waies ! Now when a fornicator

nicator or a worldling, or a merry voluptuous man is grown old, and cannot act all his sin again, he takes pleasure in remembring and telling others of his former folly; what he once was, and what he did, and the merry hours that he had; but *then* when sinners are come to themselves a little more, they will remember and tell one another of these things with another heart. Oh that they did but know now how these things will then affect them!

4. Another witness that will then rise up against them, will be the very Devils that tempted them: They that did purposely draw them to sin, that they might draw them to Torment for sin: They can witness that you harkened to their Temptations, when you would not harken to Gods Exhortations; They can witness that you obeyed them in working Iniquity. But because you may think the Accusers Testimony is not to be taken, I will not stand on this. Though it is not nothing where God knoweth it to be true.

5. The very Angels of God also may be witnesses against the wicked; Therefore are we advised in Scripture, not to sin before them, *Eccl. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 11. 10. 1 Tim. 5. 21.* I charge thee before the Elect Angels, &c. They can

can testifie that they would have been ministering Spirits for their good , when the wicked rather chose to be slaves to the Spirit of malitiousness. The holy Angels of God do many a time stand by you when you are sinning. They see you when you see not them ; they are imployed by God in some sort for your good, as well as we : And as it is the grief of Ministers, that their labours succeed not, so may we suppose that according to their state and nature it is *theirs*. For they that Rejoyce in heaven at the conversion of one sinner, may be said to sorrow , or to lose those Joyes when you refuse to be converted. These noble Spirits , these Holy and Glorious attendants of Christ that shall wait upon him to judgement , will be Witnesses against Rebellious sinners , to their Confusion. Sirs, you have all in you naturally a fear of Spirits, and invisible powers : Fear them aright , lest hearkning to the deceiving Spirits , and refusing the help of the Angels of God, and wilfully sinning before their faces you should cause them at that day, to the terrour of your souls, to stand forth as witnesses against you , to your Condemnation.

6. Conscience it self will be a most effectual witness against the wicked at that day, I before told you it will be a Discerner, and force them

them to a Confession : But a further office it hath, even to *witness* against them. If none else in the world had known of their secret sins, conscience will say, I was acquainted with them.

7. The spirit of Christ can witness against the ungodly, that he oft moved them to Repent and Return, and they rejected his motions: that he spoke to their hearts in secret, and oft set in with the Minister, and often minded them of their case, and perswaded them to God ; but they resisted, quenched and grieved the Spirit, *Acts 7.51*. As the Spirit witnesseth with the Spirits of the righteous that they are the children of God, *Rom.8.16*. so doth he witness with the Conscience of the wicked that they were children of Rebellion, and therefore are justly children of wrath. This Spirit will not alway strive with men: at last being vexed, it will prove their enemy, and rise up against them, *Gen. 6. 3. Isa. 63. 10*. If you will needs *Grieve it* now, it will *Grieve you* then. Were it not a Spirit of *Grace*, and were it not free mercy that it came to offer you, the Repulse would not have been so condemning, nor the witness of this Spirit so heavy at the last. But it was the Spirit of Jesus, that came with recovering Grace, which you resisted : And though the wages of every sin is death

death, yet you will find that it will cost you somewhat more to Reject this salvation, than to break the Creators Law of works. Kindness, *such* Kindness, will not be rejected at easie rates.

Many a good motion is now made by the Spirit to the Heart of a sinner, which he doth not so much as once observe ; and therefore doth not now Remember them. But *then* they shall be brought to his Remembrance with a witness. Many a thousand secret motions to Repentance, to Faith, to a Holy Life, will be *Then* set before the eyes of the poor, unpardon- ed, trembling sinner, which he had quite forgotten : And the Spirit of God shall testifie to his Confusion. [At such a Sermon I perswaded thy heart to Repent, and thou wouldst not ; At such a time I shewed thee the evil of thy sin, and perswaded thee to have forsaken it, but thou wouldst not ; I minded thee in thy secret thoughts, of the neerness of Judgement, and the *Certainty* and *Weight* of everlasting things, the need of Christ, and faith, and holyness, and of the Danger of sinning ; but thou didst drown all my motions in the cares and pleasures of the world. Thou harkenedst rather to the Devil than to me : The sensual inclinations of thy flesh did prevail against the strongest Arguments that I used : Though I shewed Reasons, undenyable

undeniable Reasons, from thy Creator, from thy Redeemer, from nature, from grace, from heaven, and from hell, yet all would not so much as *stop* thee, much less *turn* thee, but thou *wouldest* go on; Thou *wouldest* follow thy flesh, and now let it pay thee the wages of thy folly: Thou *wouldest* be thy own guide, and take thine own Course, and now take what thou gettest by it.]

Poor sinners, I beseech you in the fear of God, the next time you have any such motions from the Spirit of God, to Repent, and Believe and Break off your sins, and the Occasions of them, consider then what a mercy is set before you: and how it will confound you at the day of Judgement, to have all these motions brought in against you, and that the Spirit of Grace it self should be your Condemner! Alas, that men should choose their own Destruction, and wilfully choose it! and that the foreknowledge of these things should not move them to relent,

So much concerning the witness that will be brought in against the sinner.

5 The fifth Evidence that will be given against the sinner, will be, *The Instruments and Effects*. You know among men, if a man be found murdered by the high-way, and you are found standing by with a bloody sword in
your

your hand ; especially if there were a former diffention between you, it will be an Evidence that will prove a *strong presumption*, that you were the Murderer ; But if the fact be certain by other Evidence, then many such things may be brought for aggravation of the fault.

So a twofold Evidence will be brought against the sinner from these things. One to prove him guilty of the fact : the other to Aggravate the fault, and prove that his sin was very great.

For the former. 1. The very creatures which sinners abused to sin, may be brought in against them to their Conviction and Condemnation. For though these creatures shall be consumed with the last destroying Fire, which shall consume all the world, yet shall they have a Being in the memory of the sinner (*an esse Cognitum.*) The very Wine or Ale, or other liquor which was abused to drunkenness may witness against the Drunkard. The sweet morsels by which the Glutton did please his Appetite, and all the good creatures of God which he luxuriously devoured, may witness against him *Luke 16. 19. 25.* He that fared deliciously every day in this life, was told by *Abraham* when he was dead, and his soul in hell, [Remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise *Lazarus* evil things :

things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented,] though their sweet morsels and cups are past, and gone, yet must they be Remembered at Judgement and in Hell. [Remember Son] saith *Abraham* ; Yea, and Remember he must whether he will or no ; long was the Glutton in sinning, and many a pleasant bit did he taste : and so many Evidences of his sin will lie against him, and the sweetness will then be turned into gall.

The very cloathing and ornaments by which Proud persons did manifest their Pride, will be sufficient Evidence against them : as his being clothed with Purple and fine Linnen, is mentioned, *Luke 16. 19.*

The very Lands, and goods, and houses of worldlings will be an Evidence against them : Their Gold and Silver, which the covetous do now prefer before the everlasting Riches with Christ, will be an Evidence against them, *James 5. 1, 2, 3, 4.* Go to now, ye Rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your Riches are corrupted, and your Garments moth-eaten ; your Gold and Silver is cankered, and the Rust of them shall be a Witness against you, and shall eat your flesh, as it were fire, Ye have heaped Treasure together for the Last daies. Behold the hire of the Laborers, which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by

frand, cryeth; and the cryes of them which have reaped, are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabboth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the Earth, and been wanton; Ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. Oh that worldlings would well consider this one Text; and therein observe whether a life of earthly pleasure and fulness of worldly Glory and Gallantry, be as desirable as they imagine, and to what Time and Purpose they now lay up their Treasures; and how they must hear of these things hereafter; and what effect the review of their Jovial daies will have upon their miserable condemned souls.

2. The very circumstances of Time, Place, and the like, may Evidence against his condemnation. The Drunkard shall remember, in such an Ale house, I was so oft drunk, and in such a Tavern I wasted my time. The Adulterer and Fornicator shall remember the very Time, the Place, the Room, the Bed, where they committed wickedness. The thief and Deceiver will remember the Time, Place, and the persons they wronged, and the things which they robbed or deceived them of. The worldling will remember the business which he preferred before the service of God; the worldly matters which had more of his heart then his Maker and Redeemer had; the work which he
 was

was doing when he should have been Praying or Reading, or Catechising his Family, or thinking soberly of his latter end. A thousand of these will then come into his mind, and be as so many Evidences against him to his Condemnation.

3. The very effects also of mens sins will be an Evidence against them. The wife and children of a Drunkard are impoverished by his sin; his family and the neighbourhood is disquieted by him. These will be so many Evidences against him. So will the abuse of his own Reason; the enticing of others to the same sin, and hardning them by his example.

One covetous unmerciful Landlord doth keep an hundred, or many hundred persons or families in so great necessities, and care and labour, that they are tempted by it to overpass the service of God, as having scarce time for it, or any room for it in their troubled thoughts; all these miserable families and persons, and all the souls that are undone by this Temptation, will be so many Evidences against such Oppressors.

Yea, the poor whom they have neglected to relieve when they might; the sick whom they have neglected to visit, when they might, will all witness then against the unmerciful,
Mat. 25.

The many ignorant, worldly, careless sinners, that have perished under an idle, and unfaithful Minister, will be so many witnesses against him to his condemnation! They may then cry out against him to his face [I was ignorant Lord, and he never did so much as teach me, chatechize me, nor tell me of these things; I was careless, and minded the world, and he let me go on quietly, and was as careless as I, had never plainly and faithfully warned me, to waken me from my security.] And so their blood will be required at his hands, though themselves also shall perish in their sins, *Ezek. 33. 7, 8.*

2. And as these Evidences will convince men of sin, so there are many more which will convince them of the *Greatness* of their sin. And these are so many, that it would too much lengthen my discourse to stand on them. A few I shall briefly touch.

1. The very mercy of God in *Creating* men, in giving and continuing their *Being* to them, will be an Evidence for the Aggravation of their sin against him. What, will you abuse him by whom it is that you are men? will you speak to his dishonour that giveth you your speech? will you live to his dishonour who giveth you your lives? will you wrong him by his own creatures? and neglect him without whom you cannot subsist?

2. The

2. The Redemption of men by the Lord Jesus Christ, will be an evidence to the exceeding Aggravation of their sins. You sinned against the Lord that bought you, *2 Pet. 2. 1.* When the Feast was prepared, and all things were Ready, you made light of it, and found excuses, and would not come, *Mat. 22. 4, 5, 6. Luke 14. 17, 18.* Must Christ Redeem you by so dear a price from sin and misery, and yet will you continue the servants of sin, and prefer your slavery before your freedom, and choose to be Satans drudges, rather then to be the servants of God? The sorrows and sufferings that Christ underwent for you, will then prove the increase of your own sorrows. As a neglected Redeemer it is that he will condemn you. And then you would be glad that it were but true Doctrine, that Christ never dyed for you, that you might not be condemned for refusing a Redeemer, and sinning against him that shed his blood for you. How deeply will his wounds then wound your consciences! You will then Remember, that to this end he both dyed, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and the Living? And that he therefore dyed for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that dyed for them, and rose again: *Rom. 14. 9. 2 Cor. 5.*

14, 15. *Mat.* 28. 18, 19, 20. *1 Pet.* 1. 17, 18. You will then understand that you were not your own, but were bought with a price, and therefore should have glorified him that Bought you, with your Bodies and Spirits, because they were His, *1 Cor.* 6. 19, 20. This one Aggravation of your sin will make you doubly and remedilessly miserable: that you Trod under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the Covenant, wherewith you were sanctified, an unholy thing, *Heb.* 10. 26, 27, 28, 29. and crucified to your selves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame, *Heb.* 6. 5, 6.

3. Moreover; All the personal mercies which they received, will be so many Evidences for the condemnation of the ungodly. The very earth that bore them, and yielded them its fruits, while they themselves are unfruitful to God. The Air which they breathed in: the food which nourish'd them: the cloaths which cover'd them, the houses which they dwelt in, the beasts that laboured for them, and all the creatures that dyed for their use: All these may rise up against them to their condemnation. And the Judge may thus expostulate wite them, [Did all these mercies deserve no more Thanks? should you not have served him that so liberally maintained you? God thought not all these

too good for you, and did you think your hearts and services too good for him? He served yours with the weary labours of your fellow creature: and should you have grudged to bear his easie Yoak? They were your slaves and drudges, and you refused to be his free servants and his Sons: They suffered Death to feed your bodies, and you would not suffer the short forbearance of a little forbidden fleshy pleasure, for the sake of him that made you and redeemed you.]

Oh how many thousand mercies of God will then be reviewed by those that neglected them to the horror of their souls, when they shall be upbraided by the Judge with their base requital! All the deliverances from sickness and from danger; all the honours, and priviledges, and other commodities which so much contented them, will then be Gods Evidence to shame them and confound them. On this supposition doth the Apostle reprove such, *Rom. 2. 4, 5, 6.* *Despiseest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, & revelation of the righteous judgement of God, who will render to every man according to his Deeds.*

4. Moreover All the means which God used

for the Recovery of sinners in the day of their visitation, will rise up against Impenitent souls, in Judgement, to their condemnation. You can hear Sermons carelessly and sleepily now ; but O that you would consider, how the review of them will then awake you ! You now make light of the warnings of God & man, and of all the wholesome advice that is given you, but God will not then make light of your contempt. Oh what cutting Questions will they be to the hearts of the ungodly, when all the means that were used for their good, are brought to their remembrance on one side, and the temptations that drew them to sin on the other side, and the Lord shall plead his cause with their consciences, and say [Was I so hard a Master, or was my work so unreasonable, or was my wages so contemptible, that no perswasions could draw you into my service ? was Satan so good a Master, or was his work so honest and profitable, or was his wages so desirable, that you would be so easily perswaded to do as he would have you ? Was there more perswading Reason in his allurements and deceits, then in all my holy words, and all the powerfull Sermons that you heard, or all the faithfull admonitions you received ; or all the good examples of the righteous, or in all the works of God which you beheld ? Was not a reason fetcht from the
love

love of God, from the evil of sin, the blood of Christ, the Judgement to come, the glory promised, the torments threatned as forcible with you, and as good in your eyes, to draw you to holiness, as a Reason from a little fleshly delight or worldly gain, to draw you to be unholy ?]

In the name of God, sinners, I intreate you to bethink your selves in time, how you will sufficiently answer such Questions as these. You should have seen God in every creature that you beheld, and have read your duty in all his works ; what can you look upon above you, or below you , or round about you, which might not have shewed you so much of the wisdom , and goodness, and greatness of your maker, as should have convinced you that it was your duty to be devoted to his wil? and yet you have his written word that speaks plainer then all these ; And will you despise them all ? will you not see so great a Light ? will you not hear so loud and constant calls ? shall God and his Ministers speak in vain ? And can you think that you shall not hear of this again, and pay for it one day ? you have the Bible & other goods books by you ; why do you not read them ? You have Ministers at hand : why do you not go to them, and earnestly ask them, *Sir, What must I do to be saved ?* & intreat them to teach you the way to life :
You

you have some neighbors that fear God: why do you not go to them, and take their good advice, and imitate them in the fear of God, and in a holy diligence for your souls? Now is the time for you to bestir your selves; Life and Death are before you. You have gales of grace to further your voyage: There are more for you then against you. God will help you: his Spirit will help you: his Ministers will help you: every good Christian will help you: the Angels themselves will help you, if you will resolvedly set your selves to the work; And yet will you not stir? Patience is waiting on you; Mercies are enticing you: Scourges are driving you: Judgement stayeth for you: The Lights of God stand burning by you to direct you And yet will you not stir, but lie in darkness? And do you think you shall not hear of this? Do you think this will not one day cost you dear?

IX. **T**HE ninth part of our work, is to shew you, *What are those frivolous excuses by which the unrighteous may then endeavour their defence?*

Having already shewed you what the Defence must be, that must be sufficient to our Justification;

If

If any first demand, Whether the Evidence of their sin will not so overwhelm the sinner, that he will be speechless and past excuse? I answ. Before God hath done with him, he will be so; But it seems at first his dark understanding, and partial corrupted conscience will set him upon a vain Defence. For *Mat* 7. 22, 23. Christ telleth us, that [Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out Devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity. And in *Mat*. 25. 11. The foolish Virgins cry, [Lord, Lord, open to us.] And vers. 44. [Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungry, or thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not Minister unto thee?] And vers. 24. 25. They fear not to cast some of the cause of their neglect on God himself, [Then he which had received the one Talent came and said, Lord, I knew that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine.]

It is cleer then, that Excuses they will be ready

dy to make, and their full conviction will be in order after these Excuses (at least as in their minds, if not in words) But what the particular Excuses will be, we may partly know by these Scriptures which recite them, and partly by hearing what the ungodly do now say for themselves. And because it is for their present benefit that I now make mention of them, that they may see the vanity of all such Excuses, I will mention them as I now meet with them in the mouths of Sinners in our ordinary discourse; and these Excuses are of several sorts; some by which they would justifie their estate; some Excuses of particular actions; and that either in whole, or in part; some by which they would put by the penalty, though they confess the sin; some by which they lay the blame on other men: and in some they would cast it upon God himself. I must touch but some of them very briefly.

The first Excuse. *I am not guilty of these things which I am accused of. I did love God above All, and my Neighbour as my self. I did use the World but for Necessity, but God had my heart.*

Answer. The all-seeing Judge doth know the contrary, and he will make thy Conscience know it, Look back man, upon thy heart and life. How seldom and how neglectfully didst thou

thou think of God? how coldly didst thou worship him, or make any mention of him? how carelessly didst thou serve him? and think much of all that thou didst therein? Thou rather thoughtest that his Service was making more ado then needs, and didst grudge at those that were more diligent then thy self, but for the World, how heartily and how constantly didst thou seek and serve it? and yet wouldst thou now perswade the Judge that thou didst love God above all? He will shew thee thy naked heart, and the course of thy former life, which shall convince thee of the contrary.

The Second Excuse. I lived not in any gross sin, but only in small Infirmities; I was no Murderer, or Adulterer, or Fornicator, or Thief, nor did I deceive or wrong any, or take any thing by violence.

Ans^r. Was it not a gross sin to love the world above God, and to neglect Christ that dyed for thee, and never to do him one hours hearty service, but meerly to seek thy carnal self, and to live to thy flesh? God will open thine eyes then and shew thee a thousand gross sins, which thou now forgettest or makest light of; and it is not only Gross sin, but All sin, great or small, that deserveth the wrath of God, and will certainly bring thee under it for ever,

ver, if thou have not part in Christ to relieve thee. Wo to the man that ever he was born that must answer in his own name for his smallest offences.

The Third Excuse. I did it ignorantly ; I knew not that there was so much required to my Salvation. I thought less ado might have served the turn : and that if I lookt to my body, God would take care of my soul ; and that it was better to trust him what would become of me hereafter, then to trouble my mind so much about it. Had I known better, I would have done better.

Answ. If you knew not better, who was it long of but your self ? Did God hide these things from you ? Did he not tell them you in his Word as plainly as the tongue of man can speak, That except you were regenerate and born again, you should not enter into the Kingdom of God ? *John 3.3,5.* That without holiness none should see God. *Heb. 12. 14.* That you must strive to enter in at the strait gate ; for many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able, *Luke 13.24.* That if you lived after the flesh, you should dye : and if by the Spirit you mortified the deeds of the body, you should live. *Rom.8.13.* That if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his, *Rom.8.9.* And to be carnally minded is death ;
but

but to be spiritually minded is life and peace;
Rom. 8. 9. That you must not lay up for your
 selves a treasure on earth, where rust and moths
 do corrupt, and thieves break through and
 steal, but must lay up for your selves a treasure
 in heaven, where rust and moths do not cor-
 rupt, and thieves break through and steal, *Mat.*
6. 19, 20. That you must seek first the King-
 dom of God and the righteousness thereof,
Mat. 6. 23. and not Labour for the food that
 perisheth, but for the food that endureth to
 everlasting life, which Christ would have given
 you, *John 6. 27.* That if you be risen with
 Christ, you must seek those things which are
 above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand
 of God, and not the things that are on earth,
Col. 3. 1, 2, 3. Yea your very Conversation
 should be in Heaven, *Phil. 3. 19, 20, 21.*

What say you? Did not God tell you all
 this and much more; and plainly tell it you?
 Turn to your Bibles and see the words, and let
 them witness against you.

2. And could you think with any Reason, that
 your souls being so much more precious then
 your bodies, you should yet do so much more
 for your bodies, then your souls? could you think
 all the labour of your lives little enough for a
 frail body that must lie shortly in the dirt; and
 that your Immortal souls should be no more re-
 garded!

garded ? Could you think with any Reason, that your souls should do so much for a life of a few years continuance, and do no more for a life that shall have no end ?

3. And whereas you talk of *trusting God with your souls*, you did not trust him : You did but on that pretence, carelessly disregard them. If you trust God, shew any word of Promise that ever he gave you to trust upon, that ever an impenitent, Carnal, Careless person shall be saved ? No ; he hath told you enough to the contrary. And could you think that it was the will of God, that you should mind your bodies more then your souls, and this life more then that to come ? Why, he hath bid you strive, and run, and fight, and labour, and care, and seek, and use violence, and all diligence for the safety of your souls, and for the life to come : But where hath he bid you do so for your bodies ? No, he knew that you were prone to do too much for them : and therefore he hath bid you [Care not, and labour not] that is, Do it as if you did it not: and let your care and Labour for earthly things be none in comparison of that for heavenly things. You know God can as well maintain your lives without your care and labour, as save your souls without it : And yet you see he will not, he doth not : You must plough, and sow, and reap, and thresh, for all
Gods

Gods Love and Care of you, and not say, I will let all alone and trust God. And must you not much more use diligence in much greater things? If you will trust God, you must trust him in his own way, and in the use of his own means.

The fourth Excuse. *I was never brought up to learning, I cannot so much as read : nor did my Parents ever teach me any of these things, but only set me about my worldly business, and provide food and rayment for me : but never once told me that I had a soul to save or lose, and an everlasting life to provide and prepare for, and therefore I could not come to the knowledge of them.*

Answ. The greater is their sin who thus neglected you. But this is no sufficient Excuse for you. Heaven is not prepared for the Learned only : nor will Christ ask you at Judgement whether you are good Scholars or not, no nor so much as whether you could write or read. But consider well, Was not Gods word so plainly written, that the unlearned might understand it? Did he not put it into the most familiar stile, though he knew it would be offensive to the proud Scholars of the world, of purpose that he might fit it to the capacities of the ignorant? And if you could not read, yet tell me, could not you have
F learned

learned to read at 20, or 30 years of age, if you
 had been but willing to bestow now and then
 an hour to that end ? Or at least, did you not
 live near some that could Read ? and could
 you not have procured them to read to you, or
 to help you ? and did you not hear these things
 read to you in the Congregation by the Mi-
 nister ? or might have done if you would ? and
 if your Parents did neglect you in your youth,
 yet when you came to a fuller use of Reason,
 and heard of the matters of salvation from
 Gods Word, did it not concern you to have
 looked to your selves, and to have redeemed
 that time which you lost in your youth, by
 doubling your diligence when you came to
 riper years ? The Apostles gathered Churches
 among Heathens that never heard of Christ
 before ; and converted many thousand souls
 that were never once told of a Saviour, or the
 way to salvation, till they had past a great part
 of their lives. If you loytered till the latter part
 of the day, it behoved you then to have be-
 stirred your selves the more : and not to say,
 Through the fault of my Parents, I lost the be-
 ginning of my life, and therefore I will lose all ;
 they taught me not then, and therefore I will
 not learn now ; have you not seen some of your
 neighbours who were as ill educated as your
 selves, attain to much knowledge afterwards by
 their

their industry ? and why might not you have done so, if you had been as industrious as they ? May not God and Conscience witness, that it was because you cared not for knowledge, and would not be at pains to get it, that you knew no more ? Speak truth man in the presence of thy Judge ; was thy heart and mind set upon it ? Didst thou pray daily for it to God ? Didst thou use all the means thou couldst to get it ? Didst thou attend diligently on the word in publick, and think of what thou heardest when thou camest home ? Didst thou go to the Minister, or to others that could teach thee, and intreat them to tell thee the way to salvation ? Or didst thou not rather carelessly neglect these matters, and hear a Sermon as a common tale, even when the Minister was speaking of Heaven or of Hell ? It was not then thine unavoidable ignorance, but thy negligence.

Yea further, answer as in the presence of God ; Didst thou obey so far as thou *didst know* ? Or didst thou not rather sin against that knowledge which thou hadst ? Thou knewest that the soul was better then the body, and everlasting life more to be regarded then this transitory life ; but didst thou regard it accordingly ? Thou sure knewest that God was better then the world, and Heaven then earth : at least thou was told of it ; but didst thou

accordingly value him, and love him more? Thou knewest sure that there was no salvation without Faith, and Repentance, and newness of life, and yet they were neglected. In a word, many a thousand sins which were committed, and duties that were omitted, against thy own Knowledge and Conscience, will marre this Excuse.

The fifth Excuse. *I lived not under a powerful Minister to tell me of these things: but where there was no Preaching at all.*

Ans. And might you not have gone where a powerful Minister was, with a little pains? Yea, did not the very plain Word that you heard read, tell you of these things? and might you not have had a Bible your selves, and found them there?

The Sixth Excuse. *I was a Servant, and had no time from my labour to mind these matters; I lived with an hard master that required all his own work of me, but would allow me no time for the service of God. Or else, I was a poor man, and had a great charge to look after, and with my hard labour had much ado to live, so that I had no time for heavenly things.*

Ans. 1. Who should be first served, God or man? What should be first sought after? heaven or earth? Did not Christ tell thee, *One thing is necessary?* Luke 10. 41, 42. Was it not

as needfull] to see that you escape Damnation, and get safe to Heaven when this life is ended, as to see that you had food and raiment for your selves and yours ?

2. Did you spend no time in Recreation, nor Idleness nor vain talking ? why might not that at least have been spent about Heavenly things ?

3. Could you have taken no time from your rest, or eating, or at other Intermissions ? Mans Body will not endure so great Labours as have no Intermission. And why then might not godliness have been your ease and recreation ?

4. Or might you not have minded these things even when you were about your labour, if you had but a heart to them ?

5. At least you might have spent the Lords own Day in hearing, reading, and pondering of these matters, when you were forced to forbear your worldly labours, even by the wholesome Law of the Land. These therefore are all but vain excuses ; and God will shortly make thee speak out and plainly confess, It was not so much for want of Time or Helps, or warning, as for want of a heart to use them well. I should have found some time, though it had been when I should have slept, if my heart had been but set upon it.

The Seventh Excuse. Little did I think to have seen this day: I did not Believe that ever God would be so severe. I thought his Threatnings had been but to keep men in awe; and I suspected either that the Scripture was not his word, or else I thought he would be better then his word. I thought all that I heard of another life had been uncertain; and therefore was loth to let go a certainty for an uncertainty, and lose my present pleasures which I had in hand for the hopes of that which I never did see.

Ans^r. He that will not know his misery by believing to prevent it, shall know it by feeling to endure it. You were told and told again what your unbelief would bring you to. Did Gods Word make Heaven and Earth? doth it support them, and secure them: and is not his Word sufficient security for you to have trusted your souls upon? did you know where was any better security to be had? and where was any surer ground for your confidence? And did you think so basely and blasphemously of God, that he would falsifie his Word; lest such as you should suffer? and that he was fain to rule the world by a Lye? Did God make the world so easily? and can he not govern it by true and righteous means? what need God to say that which he will not do, to awe sinners? can he not awe them by Truth? is it not just that
those

those should eternally perish, that will entertain such desperate thoughts of God, and then by such wicked imaginations encourage themselves in sin against him ?

And for the Truth of Scripture, God did not bid you believe it without Evidence. He stamped on it the Image of his own Purity and Perfection, that you might know it by that Image and superscription, if you had eyes to see them : He sealed it by uncontroled multitudes of Miracles ; He delivered it down to your hands by infallible witnesses, so that he left you no room for rational doubting.

And you knew that the matters of this world were not only uncertain, but certainly vain and transitory, and would shortly come to nothing, and leave you in distress. If it had then been uncertain whether there were a Glory and Misery hereafter (as it was not) should not Reason have taught you to prefer the least probabilities of an everlasting unspeakable happiness, before that which is certainly perishing and vain ? These vain Excuses will but condemn you.

The Eighth Excuse. *I was so enticed and persuaded by sinners to do as they did, that I could not deny them : they would never let me rest.*

Answ. And were you not as earnestly persuaded by God to forsake sin and serve him

and yet that would not prevail with you? You could not deny the Devils and fools, but you could deny God and all his Messengers. Were not Ministers as earnest with you every week to repent and amend? What did men entice you with? with a little deluding fleshly pleasure for a few daies? And what did God entice you with? with the Promise of endless unconceivable felicity! And if this were a smaller matter in your eyes, then the other, then you have had your choice; be content with it, and thank yourselves. In your life time you had the good things which you chose, and preferred before heaven, and therefore cannot expect to have heaven besides.

The ninth Excuse. I lived among ungodly persons, that derided all that feared God; so that if I had not done as they did, but had made any more ado to be saved, I should have been the very scorn of the place where I lived.

Ans. And was not heaven worth the enduring of a scorn? Is not he worthy to go without it that thinks so basely of it? Did not Christ tell you, that if you were ashamed of him before men, he would be ashamed of you before his Father and the Angels of heaven? *Mark 8. 38.* He suffered more then scorns for you: and could not you suffer a scorn for him and your selves? seeing you chose
rather

rather to endure everlasting Torment, than a little derision from ignorant men, take that which you made choice of. And seeing so small a matter would drive you from heaven, and part God and you as a mock, as the wind of a mans mouth, No wonder if you be commanded to Depart from him into everlasting fire.

The tenth Excuse. *I had ungodly persons to my Parents, or Masters, or Landlord, or Governors, who threatned to undo me, if I had addicted my self to so strict a life, and if I would not believe and do as they did.*

Ans^r. What if they threatned you with present Death? Did not God also threaten you with everlasting Death, if you were not ruled by him? And whose threatning should you have chiefly feared? Is man more dreadful than God? Is death more terrible then Hell? Did not Christ bid you *fear not them that can kill the body, and after that can do no more; but fear him that is able to destroy both body and soul in hell fire; yea I say unto you, fear him, Mat. 10.28. Luke 12. 4, 5. and Isa. 51. 7. Fear ye not the Reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a Garment, & the worm shall eat them like wool, but my Righteousness shall be for ever, & my salvation from Generation to Generation.* Seeing therefore you have chosen rather to suffer from God
for

for ever, for your sin, then to suffer smal matters for well-doing for a moment, you must ever bear your own choice. Christ told you before hand, that if you could not forsake all the world and your own lives for him, you could not be his Disciples, *Matth. 10. 37, 38, 39.* And seeing you thought his terms too hard, & would needs seek you out a better service, even take what you have chosen and found.

The eleventh Excuse. *I saw so many follow their pleasure and their worldly business, and never look after these higher things, and so few go the other way, that I thought sure God would not damn so great a part of the world, and therefore I ventured to do as the most did.*

Answ. God will make good his word upon many or few. Did you doubt of his will, or of his power? For his will, he hath told it you in his word. For his power, he is as able to punish many as one man. What is all the world to him, but as a drop of a Bucket, as the dust of the ballance? He told you before hand that the gate was strait, and the way to heaven was narrow, and few did find it; and the gate to destruction was wide, and the way was broad, and many did enter in at it. *Mat. 7. 13, 14.* And if you would not Believe him, you must bear what your unbelief hath brought you to. What if you had twenty children, or servants,
or

or friends, and the greater part of them should prove false to you and seek your destruction, or prove disobedient, and turn to your enemy? would you think it a good excuse, if the rest should do the like, because of their example? will you therefore wrong God, because you see others wrong him? would you spit in the face of your own Father, if you saw others do so? God warned you, that you should not follow a multitude to do evil, *Exod. 23. 2.* And if yet you will *do as most do*, you must even *speed as most speed*. You should not so much consider, who they be, as what they do, and whither they go, and who they forsake, and what they lose, and what strength is in the Reasons that move them to do this. And then you would find, It is *God* they forsake, it is *sin* they choose; it is *heaven* they lose, it is *hell* they run into; and it is no true reason, but Satans delusion, and sensual inclinations that lead them to it. And should men be imitated, be they many, or be they few, in such a course as this?

The twelfth Excuse. *I saw so many faults in those that were accounted Godly, and saw so much Division among them, that I thought they were as bad as others; and among so many opinions, I knew not what Religion to be of.*

Ans. 1. A spot is soonest seen in the fairest cloth. And the malicious world useth to make such far worse then they are. *2. But*

2. But suppose all were true that malice faith of some, you could not say the like by others.

3. Or if you could, yet it was Gods Law, and not mens faults, that was made the Rule for you to live by : Will it excuse you that others are bad ?

4. And from their diverse opinions, you should have taken counsel at Gods word, which was right : Did you first search the Scripture impartially, as willing to know the Truth, that you might obey it ? and did you pray daily that God would lead you into the truth ? and did you obey as much as you knew ? Did you joyn with the godly so far as they are all agreed ? they are all agreed in the Fundamental Articles of Christianity, and in all things absolutely necessary to a holy Life, and to salvation : that all known sin is to be forsaken, and all known duty to be done. Why did you not so far then agree with them ? Alas, the imperfections of the godly, and the false Accusations of the malicious world, will prove but a poor cover for your wilful ungodliness, and Christ will convince you of the vanity of these Excuses

The thirteenth Excuse. *The Scriptures were so dark that I could not understand them. And I saw the wisest men differ so much in the exposition of them, that I thought it was in vain for me*

to trouble my self about them. If God would have had us live according to the Scriptures, he would sure have written them plainly, that men might understand them.

Ans. 1. It is all plainly written according to the nature of the subject: But a prejudiced, disaffected, yea or but untaught, disused soul cannot at first understand the plainest Teaching. The plainest Greek or Hebrew Grammar that can be written, will be utterly obscure to him that is but newly entred the English School: yea after many years time that he spends in learning. Did you study hard, and pray for Gods teaching, and enquire of others, and wait patiently in Christs School, that you might come to further knowledge by Degrees? and were you willing to know even those Truths that called you out to self-denial, and that did put you on the hardest flesh displeasing duties? Had you done thus, you would have admired the Light of the Holy Scripture, and now have rejoiced that ever you saw them, and not have quarrelled at its seeming Darkness. This word might have made you wise to salvation, as it hath done others, *Act. 20. 32. 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17. This Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soule; The Testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple; The statutes of the Lord are Right, Rejoycing the heart: the Commandment*

mandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning the eyes, Psal. 19. 7, 8.

2. So much as is of Necessity to salvation, is as plain as you could desire. Yet if you be Judged by these, you will be condemned: For you did not obey that which was most plain. What darkness is in such words as these, *Except ye Repent, ye shall All perish?* Luk. 13. 3, 5. *Love not the world, nor the things in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,* 1 John 2. 15. *He that will come after me, let him deny himself, &c.* Matth. 16. 24.

3. If there had been nothing that seemed difficult to you, would you not have despised its simplicity, and have thought your selves wise enough at the first Reading, and needed no more?

The fourteenth Excuse. *There were so many seeming Contradictions in the Scripture, and so many strange improbable things, that I could not believe it.*

Ans. The contradictions were in your fancy, that did not understand the word which you read. Must the raw unexperienced Learner despise his book or Teacher, as oft as in his ignorance he thinks he meets with contradictions? Did you think God was no wiser then you, and understood not himself, because you understood him not? Nor could reconcile his own words, because

because you could not reconcile them? You would needs be a Judge of the Law, instead of obeying it, and speak evil of it rather than do it, *Jam. 4. 11.*

2. And those things which you called improbable in the word, were the wonders of God, of purpose to confirm it. If it had not been confirmed by wonders, you would have thought it unproved; and yet now it is so confirmed, you will not believe the Doctrine, because the witness seems incredible. And that is, because they are matters above the power of man: as if they were therefore above the power of God! You shall at last have your eyes so far opened, as to see those seeming contradictions reconciled, and the certainty of those things which you accounted Improbable: that you may be forced to confess the folly of your Arrogancy and Unbelief; and then God will Judge you in Righteousness, who presumed unrighteously to Judge him and his word.

The fifteenth Excuse. It seemed so unlikely a thing to me, that the merciful God should damn most of the world to everlasting fire, that I could not believe it.

Ans. 1. And did it not seem as unlikely to you, that his word should be false?

2. Should it not have seemed as unlikely that

that the Governor of the world should be unjust, and suffer his Law to be unexecuted, and the worst to speed as well as the best ! and to suffer vile sinful dust to despise his mercy, and abuse his patience, and turn all his Creatures against him without due punishment ?

3. Did you not feel pain and misery begin in this life ?

4. You saw Toads and Serpents which had never sinned: And you would rather live in any tolerable suffering, then to be a Toad. And is it not Reason, that it should go worse with contemptuous sinners, then with those creatures that never sinned ?

5. Could you expect that those should come to heaven, that would not believe there was such a state, but refused it, and preferred the world before it ? And to be out of heaven, is to be out of all Happiness : and he that is so out of all happiness, and knows that he lost it by his own folly, must needs Torment himself with such considerations, were there no other Torments. And as man is capable of greater felicity then bruits, so must he needs be capable of more misery.

The sixteenth Excuse. *The things which God promised in heaven, and threatned in Hell, were all out of my sight: and therefore I could not heartily believe them. Had I but once seen them,*

or spoke with one that had seen them, I should have been satisfied, and have contemned the things of the world.

Answer. Will you not believe till you see or feel? was not Gods Word sufficient Evidence? would you have believed one from the dead that had told you he had seen such things? and would you not believe *Stephen* that saw them? *Act* 7. 56. Or *Paul* that heard and saw them? *2 Cor.* 12. 3, 4. Nor *Christ* that came purposely from heaven to reveal them? why flesh and blood cannot see them. You see not God: will you not therefore believe that there is a God? Indeed, what ever you imagine, if you would not Believe *Moses* and the Prophets, *Christ* and his Apostles, neither would you have believed though one had risen from the dead: For Gods word is more credible then a dead mans: and *Christ* did rise from the dead to attest it. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believed. *Noah* saw no rain when he was preparing the Ark: but because he believed, he made ready and escaped, *Heb.* 11. 7. when the world that would not Believe, did perish. But seeing Gods word was of no more weight with you, and no knowledge would serve your turn but by seeing and feeling; you shall see and feel everlastingly to your sorrow.

The seventeenth Excuse. It was so strict a Law
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that

that God would have Ruled me by, and the way to Heaven was so strait and difficult, that I could not endure it. I was not able to deny my flesh, and live such a life.

Answ. 1. You were not *Able*, because you were not *Willing*. What was there but your own wicked hearts that should make such a life seem grievous to you? Every thing is hard and grievous to him who loaths it, and whose heart is against it. The chief thing that God called you to, was to *love* him, and make him your *Delight* : and are Love and Delight such grievous things? It was not grievous to you to love your meat, or drink, or money : It was no hard matter to you to love a friend that loved you : no nor to love your sin, which was your enemy : and what should make it seem hard to love God, but a wicked heart? Is not he better and more *Lovely* then all these? And had you but *Loved* him, all the rest of his service would have seemed easie to you. To think of him, to speak of him, to pray to him, to praise him, yea to deny all and suffer for him, would have been sweet and pleasant to you, so far as you had *Loved* him. It was not God therefore, but your own naughty hearts, that made his work seem grievous to you, and the way to heaven seem hard. He told you truly, that his yoke was easie, and his burden light, and his Commandements were

were not grievous, *Matth. 11.29. 1 John 5.3.* They that tryed them found them the very Joy and Delight of their souls; and why could not you do so?

2 But what if the way to Heaven had been harder then it was? was not heaven worth your labour? were you affraid of being a loser by it? Could not God requite your labour or sufferings? Doth any Repent when they come to Heaven, that it cost them so dear to come thither? And is not hell worse then the hardest way to Heaven? Seeing you have chosen hell to save you a labour and suffering in this life, you must have your choice. And seeing you thought not everlasting life to be worth so much as God required, that is, the accepting thankfully, and minding, and seeking, and preferring it before this life, you have none to blame for the loss of it but your selves.

The eighteenth Excuse. *It was God that made me of a sensual nature: He gave me an Appetite to Meat, and Drink, and Ease, and Lust: he gave me that flesh which ruled me; how then can he condemn me, for living according to the nature which he gave me?*

Ans. He gave that Appetite to be exercised moderately under the rule of reason, for the preservation and propagation of mankind: but did he not also give you Reason to govern that Appetite? and the Revelation of his will to guide

guide that Reason? He gave you your flesh, to be a servant, and not a master. Your beast hath fleshly Appetite without reason; and therefore God hath put him under you who have Reason that you should Rule him. Will you let your beast do what he list, and madly run upon whom he list, and say, you do but let him live according to his nature, which God hath given him? Why God that gave him such a nature, did intend him to be Ruled by a higher nature, even by the Reason which he gave to you : and so he did also by your flesh and sensual Appetite.

The nineteenth Excuse. *But I lived among so many baits which enticed this flesh, that I could not resist them. My meat was a snare to me, my drink a snare, my cloaths, my house, my land a snare, every beauty that I saw was a snare : and the better all these were, the stronger was my snare. If God would not have had my heart ensnared and drawn from him, he should not have put so many baits in my way. Yea and they were so Neer to me, and Daily with me, that though I was resolved to forbear them before, yet when they were brought to my hand, I could not forbear.*

Answ. Is this the thanks that God hath for his mercies? He sent you all these as favours from his own hand : he wrote his own name upon them, that in them you might see his power,

er, and wisdom, and goodness, and so be led up to the Consideration of him, that you might fall in love with himself, who was the fountain, the life, the end of all. And do you overlook God in the creature, and live as without him in the world, and dote upon that which should have drawn you to himself, and then lay the blame on God? If he send a suitor to speak to you in his name, and write you a love Letter with his own hand, will you fall in Love with the Messengers or the Letter, and neglect the Sender, and then blame him that wrote his letter on so fair a paper, or in so neat a hand, or that sent it by such a comely Messenger? Certainly, these Excuses are too gross, to take with the wise and righteous God, or to seem sufficient to a well informed Conscience.

2. And whereas you speak of the power of these objects, was there not much more in God, in Christ, in the promised glory, to have drawn your heart another way? Why then did not these take as much with you as the other? You could not choose forsooth, but be enticed with such baits as were fitted to your sensual Appetite, and such things as a dog, or a swine may enjoy as well as a man: but you could *choose*, when Christ and glory were offered you: yea you did *choose* to refuse the Offer, and tread them under feet by your neglect. When

Satan set your Cups, and your harlots, and your profits before you, on one side; did not God set his favour and everlasting happiness on the other side? And was it wise or equal dealing, to prefer your lusts before that glory?

3. Moreover it was not in the power of any of those baits to force your will, or to necessitate you to choose them. They could be but *Baits* to entice you, and it was still in your own choice, whether you would yield to the enticement and choose them or not. Shall every man be false to God that hath any bait to entice him from him? will you excuse your child or friend, if he would be false to you, upon as great enticements as these? If a cup of drink, or a whore, or a little gain, could draw him more than all your love and interest, I do not think you would hold him excused.

And whereas you speak of the *Neerness* and *Continuance* of these allurements, I would fain know, was not God as *Neer* you, and *Continually* neer you, to draw you to himself? Faith might have seen him, though flesh and blood cannot. Did he not stand by you when you were in your cups and lustful Pleasures? Did he not tell you of the danger, and offer you far better things, if you would obey him and despise those baits? But you would hearken to none of this; you should have remembered that
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he stood over you, and was looking on you, and you should have said as *Joseph*, Gen. 39. 9. *How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* You had also Scripture neer you, and Reason neer you, and Conscience neer you, as well as the bait was neer you. And therefore this is a vain Excuse.

The twentieth Excuse, *It was God that let loose the Devill to tempt me: and he was too subtile for me to deal with; and therefore what wonder if I sinned and were overcome?*

Ans. 1. He did not let loose the Devil to constrain you to sin. He could but entice, and you might choose whether you would yield. The Devil could neither make you sin against your will, nor yet Necessitate you to be willing.

2. You were a sure friend to Christ that while, that would forsake him as oft as you were tempted by the Devil. Is that a friend or a servant worthy to be regarded, that will disobey you, or betray you as oft as he is tempted to it?

2. Will you excuse your servant, if he leave your work undone, and follow cards, or dice, or the Ale-house, and say I was tempted to it by one that was cunninger then I? Shall every Murderer or Thief escape hanging, because the Devill was too cunning for him in his Temptations

tations? would you have the Jury or the Judge to take this for a good excuse?

4. And why did you not hearken to God that enticed you the other way? You forget what helps he afforded you to discover the wiles of Satan, and to vanquish the Temptation? He *told* you it was an enemy that tempted you: and would you hearken to an enemy? He *told* you it was a dream, a shadow, a painted pleasure, a gilded carcass, a lying promise, and deceitful vanity by which you were tempted; And yet would you regard it before your God? He told you that it was your God, your Saviour, you hope, your everlasting happiness that the Tempter would beguile you of: And yet would you be beguiled? He told you, and plainly, and often told you that the Tempter would lead you to eternal fire, and undo you everlastingly before you were aware: and that a fatal hook was covered with that bait: And yet would you swallow it?

5. It is plain by all this that it was not your natural weakness of faculties that caused you to be overcome by the subtilties of the Devil, as a silly child is deceived by a crafty fellow that overwits him: But it was your carelessness, inconsiderateness, your sensual inclinations, and vicious disposition, that drew you to a wilful obeying of the tempter, and rejecting the whol-

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from advice of Christ. This therefore is a frivolous Excuse of your sin.

The one and twentieth Excuse. *But I hope you will not say that all men have Free Will ! And if my will were not free, how could I choose but sin ?*

Answ. Your will was not free from Gods Rule and Government : nor was it free from its natural inclination to Good in general; for either of these were more properly slavery. 3. Nor was it free from the Influence of a dark understanding, 4. Nor free from its own contracted vicious Inclination. 5. Nor freed from the Temptations of the flesh, the world and the Devil.

“ But it was 1. Free from any natural Determination to evil, or to any thing that was doubtfull. 2. And free from the Coaction or Violence of any. 3. And free from an irresistible Determination of any exterior cause, at least ordinarily. So that naturally, as men, you have the power or faculty of determining your own wils, and by your wils, of Ruling your inferiour Faculties in a great measure; yea of Ruling the senses and the Phantasie it self, which doth so much to dispose of our Understanding. And if your wils which are naturally free, are yet so habitually vicious, that they encline you to do evil, that is not an excuse, but an Aggravation

vation of your sin. But of this more under the next.

The two and twentieth Excuse. *But I have not Power of my self to do any thing that is good : what can the creature do ? without Christ we can do nothing. It is God that must give me Ability, or I can have none : and if he had given it me, I had not been an Unbeliever or Impenitent. I can no more Believe of my self, than I can fulfill the Law of my self.*

Ans. 1. These are the vain Cavils of learned folly, which God wil easily answer in a word. The word [Power] is taken in several senses. Sometime, and most commonly and fitly, for a faculty or a strength by which a man *Can* do his duty if he *Will*. This Physical Power you have, and the worst of sinners have while they are men on earth. Were they actually willing, they might acceptably perform sincere obedience ; and were they Dispositively willing, they might actually believe and will. And thus the ungodly have Power to believe.

Sometime the word [Power] is taken for Authority or Leave ; for legal or civil Power. And thus you have all not only Power or Liberty to Believe, but also a Command which makes it your Duty, and a Threatning adjoyned, which will condemn you if you do not.

Sometime the word [Power] is taken
Ethically

Ethically and less properly, for a disposition, Inclination, Habit or Freedom from the contrary habit or disposition. And in this sense its true, that none but the Effectually called have a Power to Believe. But then observe, 1. That this is but a moral less proper, and not a Physical proper Impotency : And therefore *Austin* chuseth rather to say that all men have *power* to believe, but all have not a *Will*, or *Faith* it self; because we use to difference *Power* from *willingness*; and *willingness* actuateth the *power* which we had before. And therefore our Divines choose rather to call Grace a Habit when they speak exactly, then a Power; and Dr. *Twiss* derides the Arminians for talking of a *Power* subjected in a *Power*. 2. Note that this Impotency is but the same thing with your unwillingness and wilful blindness, in another word. 3. Note that this Impotency is long of your selves as to the Original, and much more as to the not curing and removing of it. Hath God given you no means towards the cure of this disability, which you have neglected? 4. Note that this Impotency is an unjust excuse, but an Aggravation of your sin. If you were *willing* to be the servant of Christ, and yet were not Able, either because he would not accept you, or because of a want of natural faculties, or because of some other natural difficulty which the *willingest* mind could not

not overcome, this were some Excuse : But to be Habitually wilful in refusing Grace, is worse then to be meerly Actually unwilling. If a man have so accustomed himself to murder, drunkenness, stealing or the like wickedness, so far that he cannot leave it, will you therefore forgive him, or will any Judge or Jury hold him excused ? Or rather think him the more unfit for mercy ? § Note also that the want of a supernatural Habit, no nor the presence of the contrary Habit, do not Efficiently determine the will to particular acts, much less take away it natural Freedom. 6. And that till Habits attain an utter predominancy, (at least) there is a Power remaining in the will to resist them, and use means against them. Though Eventually the perverse Inclination may hinder the use of it.

The three and twentieth Excuse. *I have heard from learned men, that God doth determine all Actions, Natural and Free, as the first Efficient Physical immediate Cause : or else nothing could Act. And then it was not long of me that I chose forbidden Objects, but of him that irresistly moved me thereto, and whose Instrument I was.*

Ans. This is a trick of that wisdom which is foolishness with God, and to be deceived by vain Philosophy.

1. The very principle it self is most likely to be

be false, and those that tell you this, to err. Much more, I think, may be said against it then for it.

2. I am sure it is either false, or reconcileable with God Holiness, and mans liberty and culpability; so that its a mad thing to deceive your selves with such Philosophical uncertainties, when the Truth which you oppose by it is infallibly certain. That God is not the Author of sin, but man himself, who is justly condemned for it, is undoubtedly true: and would you obscure so clear a Truth, by searching into points beyond humane reach if not unsound, as you conclude them?

The four and twentieth Excuse. *But at least, those learned Divines among us that doubt of this, do yet say that the will is necessarily and infallibly Determined by the Practical Understanding, and that is as much irresistibly necessitated by Objects: and therefore whatever act was done by my understanding or will, was thus necessitated, and I could not help it. They say, Liberty is but the Acting of the faculty agreeably to its nature: And it was God as Creator that gave Adam his faculties: and God by providential dispose, that presented all Objects to him, by which his understanding, and so his will were unavoidably necessitated.*

Ans. This is of the same nature with the former

former : uncertain, if not certainly false. Were this true, for ought we can see, it would lay all the sin and misery of this world on God, as the irresistible necessitating Cause; which because we know infallibly to be false, we have no reason to take such principles to be true which infer it. The understanding doth not by a necessary efficiency Determine the will, but morally ; or rather, is regularly a Condition or necessary Antecedent, without which it may not Determine it self. Yea the Will by commanding the sense and phantasie, doth much to determine the Understanding. As the eye is not necessary to my *going*, but to my *going right*, so is not the Understandings Guidance necessary to my *willing* (there the simple Apprehension may suffice) but to my *Right willing*. There are other wayes of Determining the Will. Or if the Understanding did Determine the Will Efficiently and Necessarily, it is not every act of the Understanding that must do it. If it be so, when it saith, This *must* be done, and saith it importunately ; yet not when it only saith, This may be done, or you may venture on it ; which is the common part which it hath in sin.

I am not pleased that these curious Objections fall in the way, nor do I delight to put them into vulgar heads ; but finding many young

young Schollars and others that have conversed with them, assaulted with these Temptations, I thought meet to give a touch, and but a touch, to take them out of their way : As Mr. *Fenner* hath done more fully in the Preface to his *Hidden Manna*, on this last point, to which I refer you. I only add this?

The will of man in its very Dominion doth bear Gods Image. It is a self Determining Power, though it be *byassed* by *Habits* and *needs* a *Guide*. As the Heart and Vital Spirits by which it acteth, are to the rest of the Body, so is *It* to the soul. The Light of Nature hath taught all the world to carry the Guilt of every crime to the *will* of man, and there to leave it, Upon this all Laws and Judgements are grounded. From Ignorance and Intellectual weakness, men commonly fetch Excuses for their faults ; but from the *Will* they are Aggravated. If we think it strange that mans will should be the first cause, so much as of a sinful *mode*, and answer all occurring Objections : it may suffice that we are certain the Holy Majesty is not the Author of sin ; and he is able to make all this as plain as the Sun, and easily answer all these vain Excuses, though we should be unable. And if we be much ignorant of the frame and motions of our own souls, and especially of that high self determining principle, Free Will, the great
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Spring of our actions, and the curious Engine by which God doth *Sapientially* Govern the world, it is no wonder, Considering that the soul can know it self but by Reflection, and God gave us a soul to *use*, rather then to know it self; and to know its qualities and operations, rather then its Essence.

The five and twentieth Excuse. *No man can be saved, nor avoid any sin, nor believe in Christ, but those whom God hath predestinated thereto. I was under an irreversibile Sentence before I was born: and therefore I do nothing but what I was predestinated to do; and if God decreed not to save me, how could I help it?*

Ans. 1. Gods Judgements are more plain, but his Decrees or secret purposes are mysterious: And to darken certainties, by having recourse to points obscure, is no part of Christian Wisdom. God told you your Duty in his word, and on what terms you must be Judged to Life or Death; Hither should you have recourse for Direction, and not to the unsearchable mysteries of his *mind*.

2. God decreeth not to Condemn any but for sin. Sin, I say, is the Cause of that Condemnation, though not of his Decree.

3. Gods Decrees are acts Immanent in himself, and make no change on you, and therefore do not necessitate you to sin, any
more

more then his fore-knowledge doth. For both cause only a necessity of Consequence, which is Logical, as the Divines on both sides do Confess. And therefore this no more caused you to sin, then if there had been no such Decree. And its a doubt whether that Decree be not negative; a willing suspending of the Divine will, as to evil; or at most a purpose to permit it.

The six and twentieth Excuse. *If it be no more, yet doth it make my perdition unavoidable; for even Gods foreknowledge doth so; for if he foreknow it, all the world cannot hinder it from coming to pass.*

Ans. Must God either be Ignorant of what you will do, or else be the cause of it? If you foreknow that the Sun will rise to morrow, that doth not cause it to rise. If you foreknow that one man will murder another, you are not the cause of it by foreknowing it. So is it here.

The seven and twentieth Excuse. *God might have hindered my Sin and Damnation if he would.*

Ans. And will you wilfully sin, and think to scape because God doth not hinder you? The Prince that makes a Law against murder, could lock you up, and keep you from being a Murderer. But are you excusable if he do not?

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We are certain that God could have hindered all the sin and death, and confusion, and misery that is in the world: and we are as certain that he doth not hinder it (but by forbidding it, and giving men means against it:) and we are certain that he is Just, and Good, and Wise in all; and not bound to hinder it: And what his Reasons are, you may better know hereafter: In the mean time, you had been better have looked to your own Duty.

The eight and twentieth excuse. How could I be saved if Christ did not dye for me? He dyed but for his Elect; and none could be saved without his Death.

Ans. He did dye for you, and for more then his Elect, though he absolutely purposed only their salvation. Your sins crucified him, and your debt lay upon him; and he so far ransomed you, that nothing but your wilful refusal of the benefits could have condemned you.

The nine and twentieth Excuse. It was Adams sin that brought me into this Depravedness of will, which I can neither cure, nor could prevent.

Ans. 1. If Adam cast away his holiness, he could no more convey that to us which he cast away, then a Nobleman that is a Traytor, can convey

convey his lost Inheritance or Honour to his son.

2 You perish not only for your Original sin, but for rejecting the Recovering mercy of the Redeemer : you might have had Christ and Life in him for the Accepting.

The thirtieth Excuse. *God will require no more then he gives. He gave me not Grace to Repent and Believe; and without his gift I could not have it.*

Ans. 1. God will justly require more then he giveth ; that is, The improvement of his Gifts, as *Mat. 25.* shews. He gave *Adam* but a *Power* to persevere, and not *Actual* perseverance : Yet did he justly punish him for want of the Act ; even for not using by his own will the Power which he had given him.

2. It is long of your self if God did not give you Grace to Believe : It was because you wilfully refused some preparatory Grace. Christ found you at a great distance from him, and he gave you Grace sufficient to have brought you *neerer* to him than you were ; you had Grace sufficient to have made you better than you were, and restrained many sins, and brought you to the means, when you turned your back on them ; though this were not *sufficient* to cause you to *Believe*, it was *sufficient* to have brought you *neerer* to *Believing* ; and through
H 2 your

your own wilfulness, became *not Effectual*; even as *Adam* had *sufficient* grace to have stood which was *not Effectual*. So that you had not only Christ offered to you, if you would but Accept him; but you had daily and precious helps and means, to have cured your wills, and caused you to Accept him; for neglect of which, and so for not believing, and so for all your other sins you justly perish.

The one and thirtieth Excuse. *Alas, man is a worm, a dry leaf, Job 13. 25. a silly foolish creature, and therefore his Actions be not regardable, nor deserve so great a punishment.*

Answ. Though he be a worm, and as nothing to God, and foolish by sin, yet he is naturally so noble a creature, that the image of God was on him, *Gen. 12. 26. and 5. 1. James 3. 9.* and the world made his servants, and Angels his Attendants, *Heb. 1. 14.* so noble, that Christ dyed for him, God takes special care of him; he is capable of knowing and enjoying God, and heaven is not thought too good for him if he will obey. And he that is capable of so great Good, must be capable of as great Evil, and his waies not to be so overlooked by that God that hath undertaken to be his Governor. When it tendeth to Infidelity, the Devil will teach you to debase man, even lower than God would do.

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The two and thirtieth Excuse. *Sin is no Being : and shall men be damned for that which is nothing ?*

Ans. 1. It is such a *mode* as deformeth Gods creature. It is a moral Being. It is a Relation of our actions and hearts to Gods will and Law.

2. They that say, Sin is nothing, say Pain and Loss is nothing too. You shall therefore be paid with one nothing for another. Make light of your misery, and say, it is nothing, as you did of your sin.

3. Will you take this for a good Excuse from your children or servants, if they abuse you ? Or from a Thief or a Murderer ? shall he escape by telling the Judge that his sin was *No-thing* ? Or rather have death, which is nothing, as the just reward of it ?

The three and thirtieth Excuse. *But sin is a Transient thing. At least it doth God no harm, and therefore why should he do us so much harm for it ?*

Ans. 1. It hurts not God, because he is above hurt. No thanks to you if he be out of your reach. 2. You may *wrong* him, when you cannot *Hurt* him. And the *wrong* deserves as much as you can bear. If a Traytor endeavour the death of the Prince, in vain, his endea-

your deserves death, though he never *hurt* him. You despise Gods Law and Authority; you cause the Blaspheming of his name, *Rom. 2. 24.* He calls it A pressing him as a Cart is pressed with sheaves, *Amos 2. 13.* and a grieving of him.

3. And you wrong his Image, his Church, the publick good, and the souls of others.

The four and thirtieth Excuse. *But Gods nature is so good and merciful, that sure he will not damn his own creature.*

Ans. 1. A merciful Judge will hang a man for a fault against man : By proportion then what is due for sin against God ?

2. All the death and calamity which you see in the world, comes from the anger of this merciful God : why then may not future misery come from it ?

3 God knoweth his own mercy better then you do ; and he hath told you how far it shall extend.

4. He is infinitely merciful ; but it is to the Heirs of mercy ; not to the final Rejecters of his mercy.

5. Hath not God been merciful to thee in bearing with thee so long, and offering thee Grace in the blood of Christ, till thou didst wilfully reject it ? Thou wilt confess to thy everlasting wo that God was merciful ; had he not been

been so mercifull, thou wouldst not have been so miserable for rejecting it.

The five and thirtieth Excuse. *I would not so Torment mine enemy my self.*

Ans. No reason you should. It is all one to wrong you, and to wrong the God of Heaven? God is the only Judge of his own wrongs.

The sixth and thirtieth Excuse. *All men are sinners; and I was but a sinner.*

Ans. All were not Impenitent, Unbelieving, Rebellious sinners, and therefore all are not unpardoned condemned sinners. All did not live after the flesh, and refuse to the last to be converted as you did. God will teach you better to difference between sinners and sinners.

The seven and thirtieth Excuse. *But if Christ have satisfied for my sins, and dyed for me, then how can I justly suffer for the same sins? will God punish one sin twice?*

Ans. 1. Christ suffered for man in the Nature of man; but not in your person, nor you in him. It was not you that provided the price, but God himself: Christ was not mans Deligate in satisfying, and therefore received not his Instructions from us, nor did it on our terms, but his own. It was not the *same thing* which the Law threatned, that Christ underwent: for that was the Damnation of the sinner himself, and not the suffering of another for him; it cannot there-

fore be yours, but on Christs own terms. He dyed for thy sin, but with this intent, that for all that, if thou Refuse him, thou shalt dye thy self. It is therefore no wrong to thee to dye, for it was not thou that dyedst before : and Christ will take it for no wrong to him : for he will Judge thee to that Death. It is for refusing a Christ that dyed for thee, that thou must perish for ever.

The eight and thirtieth Excuse. *But I did not Refuse Christ. I believed and trusted in him to the last ; and Repented of my sins, though I sometime was overtaken with them.*

Answ. Had this been true, thy sin would not have condemned thee. But there is no mocking God. He will shew thee then thy naked heart, and convince thousands that thought they Believed and Repented, that indeed they did not. By thy works also will this be discovered, that is, by the main bent and scope of thy life, as *Mat. 25.* throughout, and *7am. 2.*

The nine and thirtieth Excuse. *I did many Good works ; and I hope God will set those against my evil works.*

Answ. Thy good works were thy sins, because indeed they were not good, being not done in sincerity of heart for God. The best mans works have some infirmity, which nothing can cleanse but the blood of Christ, which thou
hast

hast made light of, and therefore hast no part in. If all thy life had been spent in perfect works except one day, they would not make satisfaction for the sins of that day. For they are but part of thy Duty. Wo to him that hath no better a Saviour at Judgement, then his own good works.

The Fortieth Excuse. *I lived in poverty and misery on earth, and therefore I hope I have had my suffering here, and shall not suffer in this world and another too.*

1. By that Rule all poor men, and murderers, and thieves that are tormented and hanged, should be saved. But as Godliness hath the promise of this life and that to come, so Impenitency and Wickedness hath the Threatning of this life and that to come.

2. The Devils and the damned have suffered much more then you already; and yet they are never the nearer a Deliverance. When thou hast suffered ten thousand years, thy pain will be never the nearer an end. How then can a little misery on earth prevent it? Alas poor soul, these are but the foretastes and beginnings of thy sorrow. Nothing but pardon through the blood of Christ could have prevented thy Condemnation; and that thou rejectest by Infidelity and Impenitency. *His Sufferings would have saved thee, if thou hadst not Refused*

fed him ; but all thy own Sufferings will yeild thee no Relief.

So much for the answering of the *Vain Excuses* which poor Sinners are ready to make for themselves ; Wherein I have been so large, as that this part I confess is disproportionable to the rest : but it was for these two Reasons.

1. That poor careless souls might see the vanity of such defences ; and consider, if such a worm as I can easily confute them, how easily and how terribly will they be all answered by their Judge ?

2. I did it the rather, that godly Christians might the better understand how to deal with these vain Excuses when they meet with them : which will be daily, if they deal with men in this sad Condition.

X. **W**E have done with that part of the Judgement which consisteth in the exploration or tryal of the cause ; we now come to that which is the Conclusion and consummation of all ; and that is, to shew you *what the Sentence will be, and on whom.*

And for this, we must go strait to the word of God for our light, it being impossible for any man to have any particular knowledge of it, if

if Christ had not there revealed it unto us. Indeed almost all the world do acknowledge a life after this, where it shall go well with the good, and ill with the bad. But who shall be then accounted *Righteous*, and who *Unrighteous*, and on what terms and grounds, by whom they shall be judged, and to what conditon, they know not.

The Sentence in Judgement will be, 1. Either on those that never had means to know Christ.
2. Or on those that had.

1. For the former, as it less concerneth us to enquire of their case, so it is more obscurely revealed to us in the Scripture. It is certain that they shall be Judged according to their Use of the means which they had, *Rom. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.* and the Talents which they received, *Mat. 25.* But that it ever falleth out that he that hath but the One Talent of natural helps, doth improve it to salvation; or that ever they who knew not Christ, are Justified and saved without that knowledge (being at age and use of reason) I find not in the Scriptures. I find indeed that [As many as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law : and as many as have sinned *in* the Law, shall be Judged by the Law. *Rom. 2. 12.* But not that any are Justified by the works of nature, such as are here said to be *without Law*. I find also, that
[They

[They have the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing, or else Excusing one another, in the day *when* God shall Judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ according to the Gospel] *Rom. 2. 15, 16.* And I believe it is a *just Excuse*, and not an *unjust* which is here meant. But it will be but an *Excuse* so far as they were guiltless : and that will be but *in tanto*, and not *in toto*, in part only; and so not a full Justification. A Heathens conscience may excuse him from those sins which he was never guilty of ; but not from all. But no more of them.

2. The case of those that have had the Gospel, is more plainly opened to us in Gods word. Their *Sentence* is opened in many places of Scripture, but most fully in *Math. 25.* whence we will now collect it.

There we find that Jesus Christ the Redeemer, as King of the world, shall sit in Judgment on all men at the last ; and shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth the Sheep from the Goats, and so shall pass the final Sentence. This Sentence is twofold, according to the different Condition of them that are Judged. To them on the right hand, there is a Sentence of Justification, and Adjudication to everlasting glory ; To them on the left hand, there is a Sentence of Condemnation to everlasting Punishment.

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The Sentence on each of these containeth both the state which they are Judged to, and the reason or cause of the Judgement to that state. For as God will not Judge any to Life or Death without just cause, so he will publish this cause in his sentence, as it is the manner of Judges to do ; If you say, *Christ will not use a voice* ; Let it satisfie, that though we know not the manner, yet if he do it but by mental discovery, as he shews men *what* shall everlastingly befall them, so he will shew them *why* it shall so befall them.

1. The *Sentence* on them on the *Right* hand, will contain, 1. Their Justification and Adjudication to *Blessedness*, and that both as generally denominated, and as particularly determined, and described. 2. And the cause of this Judgement.

1. In general they shall be pronounced *Blessed*. Satan would have had them cursed and miserable : the Law did curse them to misery ; Many a fearful thought hath possessed their own breasts, least they should prove at last accursed and miserable ; But now they hear the contrary from their Judge. All the Promises in the Gospel could not perfectly overcome those their fears ; all the comfortable words of the Ministers of the Gospel could not perfectly subdue them ; all the tender mercies of God in Christ did not perfectly subdue them ; But now they
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are vanquished all for ever. He that once had heard his Redeemer in Judgement call him *Blessed*, will never fear being *Cursed* more. For he that Christ Blesseth, shall be *Blessed* indeed.

The Description of their blessedness followeth, *Come inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* And also they are called *Blessed Of the Father*. Here is the fountain of their Blessedness, The Father; and the state of their blessedness in Being the Fathers: For I suppose they are called *the Blessed of the Father*, both because the Father blesseth them, that is, makes them Happy, and because these blessed ones are the Fathers *own*. And so Christ will publish it to the world in Judgement, that he came to glorifie the Father, and will proclaim him the Principal Efficient, and Ultimate end of his work of Redemption and the blessedness of his Saints; and that himself is (as Mediator) but the *way* to the Father. It is the Father that *prepared* the Kingdom for them, and *from the foundation of the world*, prepared it; Both for [them] as *chosen ones*, and for them as *future believers and Righteous ones*. It is called a Kingdom, partly in respect to God the King, in whose glory we shall partake in our places: and partly Metaphorically from the Dignity of our Condition. For so it is that our selves are said to be made
Kings,

Kings, *Rev.* 1.6. and 5.1. 1 *Pet.* 2.9. and not that we are properly Kings ; for then we must have Subjects who must be Governed by us.

Thus we see their Blessedness in the Fountain, end and state of Dignity. As to the Receptive Act on their part, it is expressed by two words ; one signifying their first entrance on it, *Come* : the other their *Possession, Inherit* : that is, possess it as given by the Father, and Redeemed by the Son, and hold it in this Tenure for ever.

The true Believer was convinced in this life, that indeed there was no true blessedness, but this enjoyment of God in the Kingdom of heaven. The Lord revealed this to his heart by his Word and Spirit : And therefore he contemned the seeming happiness on earth, and laid up for himself a Treasure in heaven, and made him friends with the Mammon of unrighteousness, and ventured all his hope in this vessel. And now he findeth the wisdom of that choice in a rich return. God made him so *wise* a Merchant as to sell All for this Pearl of greatest price : and therefore now he shall find the gain. As there is no other true Happiness but God in glory ; so is there nothing more *suitable* and *welcome* to the true Believer. O how welcome will the face of that God be, whom he *loved*, whom he *sought*, whom he *longed*

longed and waited for. How welcome will that Kingdom be which he lived in *Hope* of! which he parted with All for! and suffered for in the flesh! How glad will he be to see the Blessed face of his Redeemer, who by his manifold Grace hath brought him unto this! I leave the believing soul to think of it, and to make it the daily matter of his Delightful Meditation; What an unconceivable Joy in one moment, this Sentence of Christ will fill his soul with. Undoubtedly it is now quite past our comprehension: though our imperfect forethoughts of it may well make our lives a continual Feast.

Were it but our Justification from the Accusations of Satan, who would have us Condemned either as *sinners* in general, or as Impenitent, Unbelieving Rebels, against him that Redeemed us, *in special*, it would lift up the heads of the Saints in that day: After all the fears of our own hearts, and the slanderous Accusations of Satan and the world, That we were either impenitent Infidels, or Hypocrites, Christ will then Justifie us, and pronounce us *Righteous*. So much for the *Condition to which* they are Judged.

2. The Reason or Cause of this Justification of the Saints, is given us both 1. In a general denomination, and 2. In a particular Description. 1. In General, it is because they were *Righteous*, as is evident, *Mat. 25. 46.*

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The Righteous shall go into life Everlasting.
 And indeed it is the business of every just Judge to justify the righteous, and condemn the unrighteous. And shall not the Judge of all the earth judge righteously? *Gen. 18.25.* God makes men Righteous before he Judges them so : and Judgeth them Righteous *Because* they are so. He that abominateth that man who saith to the Righteous, Thou art wicked ; or to the wicked, Thou art Righteous ; who Justifieth the wicked, and Condemneth the Righteous ; will certainly never do so himself.

Indeed he will Justifie them that are sinners, but not against the Accusation *that they are sinners* : but against the Accusation, that *they are guilty of punishment for sin* : but that is, because he first made them just ; and so Justifiable, by pardoning their sin, through the blood of Christ.

And its true also, that he will Justifie those that *were wicked*, but not those that *are wicked* : but Judgement findeth them as Death leaveth them, and he will not take them for wicked, that are sanctified and cleansed of their former wickedness. So that Christ will first pardon them before he Justifie them against the charge of being sinners in general ; and he will first give men Faith, Repentance, and new Obedience, before he will Justifie them against the
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charge of being Impenitent, Infidels or Hypocrites, and consequently unpardoned, and doubly guilty of damnation. This twofold righteousness he will first *Give* men, and so constitute them Just, before he will *Declare* it, and *Sentence* them just.

2. The Reason of the Sentence, particularly Described, is from their Faith and Love to Christ, expressed in their Obedience, self-denial and forsaking all for him. *For I was hungry and ye fed me; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; Naked and ye cloathed me: I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came to me. Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me, Mat. 25, 35. to 41.* Here is 1. The causal conjunction *for*, 2. And the Cause or Reason it self.

Concerning both which, observe, 1. How it is that mans obedience and self-denial is the Reason and Cause of his Justification. 2. Why it is that God will have the Reason or Cause thus declared in the Sentence.

For the first, observe that its one thing to give a Reason of the Sentence, and another thing to express the Cause of the Benefit, *Given* us by the promise, and *Judged* to us by the Sentence. Mans Obedience was no proper Cause

Cause why God did in this life Give pardon of sin to us, or a Right to glory : much less of his Giving Christ to dye for us. And therefore as to our Constitutive Justification at our Conversion, we must not *say* or *think* that God doth Justifie us, For, or *Because* of any works of our Obedience, Legal or Evangelical. But when God hath so Justified us, when he comes to give a Reason of his Sentence in Judgement, he may and will fetch that Reason partly from our Obedience, or our performance of the Conditions of the New Covenant. For as in this life, we had a Righteousness consisting in free pardon of all sin through the blood of Christ, and a Righteousness consisting in our personal performance of the Conditions of the promise which giveth that pardon and continueth it to us : so at Judgement we shall accordingly be justified. And as our Evangelical personal Righteousness, commonly called *Inherent*, was at first only in our Faith and Repentance, and Disposition to obey : but afterward in our actual sincere Obedience, in which sense we are Constitutively Justified or made Righteous here by our works, in *James* his sense, *James* 2. 24. so accordingly a double Reason will be assigned of our sentential Justification ; one from our pardon by Christs blood and merits ; which will prove our Right to Im-

punity and to Glory. The other from our own Faith and holy Obedience, which will prove our Right to that pardon through Christ, and to the free Gift of a Right to glory : and so this last is to be pleaded in subordination to the former. For Christ is become the Author of Eternal salvation to all them that Obey him. *Heb. 5. 9.* He therefore that will be saved, must have a *Christ* to save him as the Author, and an *Obedience* to that Christ as the Condition of that salvation; and consequently both must be declared in the Judgement.

The Reason why the Judge doth mention our Good works, rather then our Believing, may be because those holy self-denying expressions of Faith and Love to Christ do contain or certainly imply Faith in them, as the life of the tree is in the fruit : but faith doth contain our works of Obedience but only as their cause. These works also are a part of the personal Righteousness which is to be enquired after, that is, we shall not be judged righteous, meerly because we have Believed, but also because we have added to our Faith vertue, and have improved our Talents, and have loved Christ to the hazard of all for his sake. For it is not only or principally for the goodness of the work considered in it self, or the good that is done by it to the poor; but it is as these works did express

press our Faith and Love to Christ by doing him the most costly and hazardous service; that by Faith we could see Christ in a poor beggar or a prisoner; and could love Christ in *these* better than our worldly goods or liberties; which we must part with, or hazard by the works that are here mentioned.

2. The Reasons why Christ will so publickly Declare the personal righteousness of men, to be the Reason or Cause of his justifying sentence, it is because it is the business of that day, not only to glorifie Gods meer Love and Mercy, but eminently to glorifie his Remunerative justice; and not only to express his love to the Elect, as such, but to express his love to them as *Faithful and Obedient*, and such as have denied all for Christ, and loved God above all; And to shew his justice to the men, and faithfulness in fulfilling all his promises, and also his holiness in the high estimation of the holiness of his people. I shall express this in the words of a Learned Divine (Dr. Twiss against Mr. Cotton, pag. 40) *Was there no more in Gods intention when he elected some, then the manifestation of the riches of his glorious grace? Did not God purpose also to manifest the glory of his Remunerative Justice? It is not undenyable that God will bestow Salvation on all his Elect (of ripe years) by way of reward and Crown of righteousness,*

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which God the Righteous Judge will give? 2 Tim. 4. 2 Thes. 1. It is great pitty this is not considered, as usually it is not : Especially for the momentous Consequence thereof in my Judgement. So far he.

So much of the Sentence of Justification which shall be passed by Christ at Judgement upon the Righteous.

2. We are next to consider of the Sentence of Condemnation which shall then by Christ be passed on the unrighteous. Which is delivered to us by Christ, *Mat. 25.* in the same order as the former.

This Sentence containeth, 1. The Condemnation it self. 2. The Reason or Cause of it.

The Condemnation expresseth the misery which they are Judged to. 1. Generally in the Denomination, *Cursed.* 2. Particularly by Description of their Cursed state.

To be *cursed*, is to be a people destinated and adjudged to utter unhappiness; to all kind of misery without remedy.

2. Their *Cursed* condition is described in the next words, *Depart from me into Everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

1. *Depart* : From whom? from the God that made them in his Image. From the Redeemer that bought them by the price of his blood, and offered

offered to save them freely, for all their unworthiness, and many a time intreated them to Accept his offer, that their souls might live. From the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier and comforter of the faithful, who strove with their hearts, till they quenched and expelled him. O sad *Departing*! who would not then choose rather to *Depart* from all the friends he had in the world, and from any thing imaginable; from his life, from himself, if it were possible, then from Christ? *Depart*: from what? why from the presence of the Judge; from all further hopes of salvation for ever: from all possibility of ever being saved, and living in the joyful inheritance of the Righteous. *Depart*: Not from Gods Essential presence, for that will be with them to their everlasting misery, but from the presence of his Grace, in that measure as they enjoyed it. *Depart*: Not from your fleshly pleasures, and honours, and profits of the world; these were all gone and past already: and there was no further need to bid them *Depart* from these: Houses and Lands were gone. Mirth and Recreations were gone. Their sweet morsels and cups were gone. All the Honour that men could give them was gone, before they were set at Christs bar to be Judged. But from all expectations of ever enjoying these again, or ever *tasting* their for-

mer Delights; from these they must Depart: not from their *sin*, for that will go with them. But the Liberty of committing that part of it which was sweet to them, as Gluttony, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Idleness, and all Voluptuousness; from these they must *Depart*. But this is consequential; It is Christ and the possibility of salvation, that they are Sentenced to *Depart* from.

But *whither* must they *Depart*? 1. Into fire. 2. Into *that* fire which was prepared for the Devil and his Angels. 3. Into everlasting fire.

1. Not into a *Purifying*, but a *Tormenting* fire. Whether Elementary or not; whether properly or Metaphorically called *fire*, let us not vainly trouble our selves to enquire. It is enough to know, that as fire is one of the most grievous Tormentors of the flesh, so grievous will be those infernal Torments to the whole man, soul and body; such as is most fitly represented to us under the notion of *fire*, and of *burning*. It is easie for a secure unbelieving soul to read and hear of it; but woe, and ten thousand woes to them that must endure it! In this life they had their good things, when it went harder as to the flesh with better men; but now they are tormented, when the godly are comforted, as *Luke* 16. 25.

2. But

2. But why is it called *a fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels* ? 2. What is this Devil that hath Angels ? 2. Who are his Angels ? 3. When was it prepared for them ? 4. Was it not also prepared for wicked men ? To these in order.

1. It seems by many passages in Scripture, that there is an Order among Spirits, both Good and Bad ; and that there is one Devil that is the Prince over the rest.

2. It seems therefore that its the rest of the evil spirits, that are called *his Angels*. And some think that the wicked who served him in this life, shall be numbred with his Angels in the life to come. Indeed the Apostle calls him *The God of this world*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. as is ordinarily Judged by Expositors; and *the Prince of the power of the Ayr, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*. Eph. 2. 2. And he calleth false seducing Teachers *the Ministers of Satan*. 2 Cor. 11. 15. But that wicked men are here meant as part of his Angels, is not clear.

3. If it be the preparation of Gods purpose that is here meant, then it was from Eternity : but if it be any Commination of God as Ruler of the Angels, then was this fire prepared for them Conditionally, from the beginning of that Commination, and was *Due* to them at their fall.

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4. It seems that the Reason why here is no mention of preparing Hell-fire for the wicked, but only for the Devils, is not because indeed it *was not* prepared also for the wicked ; but to note that it is the Torment which was *first* prepared for, or assigned to the Devils, thereby shewing the greatness of the misery of the wicked, that the Devil and his Angels must be their Companions. Though some think, as is said before, that the reason why wicked men are not mentioned here, is, because they are part of the Angels of the Devil, and so included. And some think it is purposely to manifest Gods General Love to mankind, that prepared not Hell *for them*, but they cast themselves into the Hell prepared for the Devils. But the first seems to be the true sense.

And how apparently Righteous are the Judgements of the Lord ! that those men who would here entertain the Devil into their hearts and daily familiarity, should be then entertained by him into *his* place of Torments, and there remain for ever in his society ! Though few entertained him into Visible familiarity with their bodies as Witches do, who so make him their *Familiar* ; yet all wicked men do entertain him in o more full and constant familiarity with their souls than these witches do with their bodies ; how *familiar* is he in their thoughts, to fill them

them with vanity, lust, or revenge ! How *familiar* is he in their hearts to fill them with covetousness, malice, pride, or the like evils ? and to banish all thoughts of returning to God, and to quench every motion that tendeth to their recovery ? How *familiar* is he with them, even when they seem to be worshiping God in the publike Assemblies, stealing the word out of their hearts, filling them with vain and wandering thoughts, blinding their minds that they cannot understand the plainest words that we are able to speak to them, and filling them with a proud rebellion against the Direction of their Teachers, and an obstinate refusal to be ruled by them, be the matter never so necessary to their own salvation ? How *familiar* are these evil Spirits in their houses, filling them with ignorance, worldliness, and ungodliness, and turning out Gods service, so that they do not pray together once in a day, or perhaps at all ? How *familiarly* doth Satan use their tongues, in cursing, swearing, lying, ribaldry, backbiting, or slandering ? and is it not just with God to make these fiends their *familiar*s in Torment, with whom they entrained such *familiarity* in sin ? As Christ with all the Blessed Angels and Saints will make but one Kingdom or family, and shall live altogether in perpetual Delights ; so the Devil and all his Hellish Angels and wicked

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men shall make but one house-hold; and shall live altogether in perpetual misery. O poor sinners ! you are not troubled now at his presence and power in your hearts ; but will you not then be troubled at his presence and tormenting power ? As long as you do not *see* him, let him do what he will with you, it grieves you little or nothing at all ; but what will you say when you *must see* him, and abide with him for ever ? Oh Sirs, his name is *easily* heard, but his company will be terrible to the stoutest heart alive. He sheweth you a smiling face when he tempteth you, but he hath a grimmer face to shew you, when temptations have conquered you, and torments must succeed ! As those that write of Witches, say, he appeareth at first to them in some comely tempting shape, till he have them fast tyed to him ; and then he beats them, and affrights them, and seldom appears to them but in some ugly hew. Believe it, poor sinners, you do not hear or see the worst of him, when you are merry about your sinful Pleasures, and Rejoycing in your Hopes of the Commodities or Preferments of the world : he hath another kind of Voice which you must hear, and another face to shew you, that will make you know a little better, whom you had to do with ! You would be afraid now to meet him in the dark :
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what will you be to live with him in everlasting darkness? Then you will know who it was that you entertained and obeyed, and plaid with in your sins.

3. And as the Text tells us, that it is *a fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*: So it telleth us, that it is *An everlasting fire*. It had a beginning, but it shall have no end. If these wretches would have chosen the service of God, they would have met with no difficulty or trouble, but what would have had a speedy end. Poverty and Injuries would have had an end: scorns and abuses would have had an end: fasting, humiliation, sorrow for sin, watching, and fighting against our spiritual enemies, would all have had an end. But to avoid these, they chose that ease, that pleasure, which hath brought them to that torment which *never* will have end. I have said so much of these things already in my Book called the Saints Rest, that I will now say but this much. It is one of the wonders of the world, how men that do believe, or think they do believe this word of Christ to be true, that *the wicked shall go into Everlasting fire*, can yet venture on sin so boldly, and live in it so fearlessly, or sleep quietly till they are out of this unspeakable Danger! Only the Commonness of it, and the known wickedness of mans heart, doth make this less wonderful

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And were there nothing else to convince us that sinners are Mad and Dead as to spiritual things, this were enough; That ever the greatest pleasures or profits of the world, or the most enticing baits that the Devil can offer them, should once prevail with them to forget these endless things, and draw them to reject an Everlasting Glory, and cast themselves desperately into *Everlasting fire*; Yea and all this under daily warnings and instructions; and when its told them before hand by the God of Truth himself! For the Lords sake, Sirs, and for your souls sakes, if you care not what Ministers say, or what such as I say, yet will you soberly read now and then this 25. Chapter of *Matthew*, and Regard what is told you by him that must be your Judge! and now and then bethink yourselves soberly, whether these are matters for wise men to make light of? and what it is to be *Everlastingly in Heaven or in Hell fire*.

2. We have seen what is the Penalty contained in the sentence against the ungodly; The next thing that the Text directs us to, is the Cause or Reason of the Sentence, vers. 42. *For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat, &c.* The Reason is not given expressly either for their sin against the Law of works, that is, Because they were sinners, and not perfectly *Innocent*; Nor yet from

from their unbelief which is the great sin against the Law of Grace : But it is given from their not expressing their Faith and Love to Christ in works of mercy and self-denial. And why is this so ?

1. We must not suppose that these words of Christ do express the *whole* Judicial process in every point ; but the chief parts. It is supposed that all men are convicted of being sinners against the perfect Law of the Creator, and that they are guilty of Death for that sin : and that there is no way but by Christ to obtain deliverance. But because all this must be acknowledged by the righteous themselves, as well as by the wicked, therefore Christ doth not mention this, but that only which is the turning point or cause in the Judgement. For it is not all sinners that shall be finally Condemned, but all Impenitent, Unbelieving sinners, who have Rebelled finally against their Redeemer.

2. And the reason why Faith it self is not expressed, is. 1. Because it is clearly implied, and so is love to Christ as Redeemer : in that they should have Relieved *Christ* himself in his members : that is, as its expressed, *Matth.* 10.42. they should have received a Prophet in the name of a Prophet ; and a Disciple in the name of a Disciple ; All should be done for Christs sake ; which could not be, unless they

they Believed in him, and Loved him. 2. Also because that the bare Act of Believing is not all that Christ requireth to a mans final Justification and Salvation ; But holy self-denying Obedience must be added. And therefore this is given as the Reason of their Condemnation that they did not so obey.

We must observe also, that Christ here putteth the special for the general ; that is, one way of self-denying Obedience, and expression of Love, instead of such Obedience in general ! For all men have not ability to relieve those in misery, being perhaps some of them poor themselves. But all have that Love and self-denial, which will some way express it self. And all have hearts and a Disposition to do thus, if they had ability ; without such a Disposition, none can be saved.

It is the fond conceit of some, that if they have any love to the godly, or wish them well, it is enough to prove them happy. But Christ here purposely lets us know that whoever doth not Love him at so high a rate, as that he can part with his substance or any thing in the world, to those uses which he shall require them, even to relieve his servants in want and sufferings for the masters sake, that man is none of Christs Disciple, nor will be owned by him at the last.

X I. **T**HE next point that we come to, is to shew you the *Properties* of this Sentence at judgement.

When man had broken the Law of his Creator at the first, he was lyable to the Sentence of Death, and God presently sat in judgement on him, and sentenced him to some part of the Punishment which he had deserved; but upon the Interposition of the Son, he before the rest, resolved on a way that might tend to his Recovery; and Death is due yet to every sinner for every sin which he commits, till a pardon do acquit him. But this Sentence which will pass on sinners at the last judgement, doth much differ from that which was passed on the first sin, or which is Due according to the Law of works alone; for,

I. As to the Penalty, called the pain of Loss, the first judgement did deprive man of the favour of his Creator, but the second will deprive him of the favour both of the Creator and Redeemer; the first judgement deprived him of the Benefits of Innocency: the second deprives him of the Benefits of Redemption; the loss of his hopes and possibility of a pardon; of the Spirit, of Justification and Adoption, and of the bene-

fits which Conditionally were promised and offered him ; these are the Punishments of the last Judgement, which the Law of works did never threaten to the first man, or to any, as it stood alone.

Also the loss of glory as recovered, is the proper penalty of the violated Law of Grace : which is more then the first loss. As if a man should lose his Purse the second time, when another hath once found it for him ; or rather as if a Traytor Redeemed by another, and having his life and honours offered him, if he will thankfully accept it and come in, should by his refusal & obstinacy, lose this recovered life, which is offered him ; w^{ch} is an addition to his former penalty.

Besides that the Higher degree of Glory will be lost, which Christ would bestow on him, more than was lost at first. The very work of the Saints in heaven, will be to Praise and Glorifie him that Redeemed them ; and the Father in him ; which would not have been the work of man, if he had been innocent.

2. As to the pain of sence, the last Judgement by the Redeemer will Sentence them to a far forer punishment then would have befallen them, if no Saviour had been offered them, *Heb. 10. 29.* The conscience of *Adam* if he had not been Redeemed, would never have tormented him for Rejecting a Redeemer, nor for refusing

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Or abusing his gracious offers, and his mercies ; nor for the forfeiting of a Recovered Happiness ; nor for refusing the easie terms of the Gospel, which would have given him Christ and Salvation for the Accepting ; nor for neglecting any means that tended to Recovery : no nor for refusing Repentance unto Life, nor for disobeying a Redeemer that bought him by his blood. As all these are the penalties of the Redeemers Law and judgement, so is it a sorer penalty then Conscience would have inflicted meerly for not being perfectly innocent : and they will be far soarer gripings and gnawings of the never-dying worm for the abuse of these Talents, than if we had been never trusted with any after our first forfeiture. Yea and God himself will accordingly proportion his punishments. So that you see that privatively and positively, or as to their Loss and their Feeling, the Redeemer will pass on them a heavier doom then the Creator did, or would have done according to the first Law to perfect man.

3. Another Property of the judgement of Christ, is, that *It will be Final, Peremptory, and Excluding all further hopes or possibilities of a Remedy.* So was not the first Judgement of the Creator upon fallen man. Though the Law of pure Nature knew no Remedy, nor gave man any hope of a Redeemer : yet did it not

exclude a Remedy, nor put in any bar against one ; but God was free to Recover his Creature if he pleased. But in the Law of Grace he hath resolved, that there shall be no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of Judgement and fire which shall devour the adversarie, *Heb.* 10. 26. 27. and that the fire shall be Everlasting, the worm shall not dye, and the fire shall not be quenched, *Mat.* 25. ult. *Mat.* 13. 42, 50. *John* 5. 27. *Mat.* 5. 26. *Mat.* 3. 12. and *Luke* 3. 17. *Mark* 9. 43, 44, 45, 46, 48. He that now breaketh that pure Law that requireth perfect innocency (as we have all done) may fly to the Promise of Grace in Christ, and Appeal to the Law of Liberty, or deliverance, to be Judged by that. But he that falls under the penalty of that Law which should have saved him, as all final Unbelievers and Impenitent Ungodly persons do, hath no other to Appeal to. Christ would have been a Sanctuary and Refuge to thee from the Law of works, hadst thou but Come in to him : But who shall be a Refuge to thee from the wrath of Christ ? The Gospel would have freed thee from the Curse of the Law of works, if thou hadst but believed and obeyed it : But what shall free thee from the Condemnation of the Gospel ? Had there no Accusation lain against thee, but that thou wast in general a sinner, that is, that thou wast

wast not perfectly Innocent, Christ would have answered that charge by his blood. But seeing thou art also guilty of those special sins which he never shed his blood for, who shall deliver thee from that Accusation? When Christ gave himself a ransom for sinners, it was with this resolution both in the Father and himself, that none should ever be Pardoned, Justified or Saved by that ransom, that did not in the time of this life, sincerely return to God by Faith in the Redeemer, and live in sincere obedience to him, and persevering herein. So that he plainly *excepted* final Infidelity, Impenitency and Rebellion from pardon: He never dyed for the final non-performance of the conditions of the New covenant. So that his judgement for these will be peremptory and remediless. If you say, Why cannot God find out a remedy for this sin, as well as he did for the first? I say, God cannot lye, *Tit. 1. 2.* He must be True and Faithful, as necessarily as he must be God, because of the Absolute perfection of his nature; and he hath said and resolved, that there shall be no more remedy.

Many other Properties of Gods judgement general there are, as that Righteousness, Impartiality, Inflexibility, and the like, which because I would not make my Discourse too long, I will pass over, contenting my self with the

mention of these which are Proper to the Judgement of the Redeemer according to his own Laws in special.

XII. **T**HE twelfth and last thing which I promised to unfold, is, *The Execution of this Judgement*. Here I should shew you both the certainty of the Execution, and by whom it will be, and how : but having done all this already in the third Part of the foresaid *Book of Rest*, I shall now only give this brief touch of it.

No sooner is the dreadful Sentence past, *Goye cursed into Everlasting fire*, but away they must be gone : There is no delay : much less any Reprieve to be expected ; and yet much less is there any hope of an Escape. If the Judge once say, *Take him Jaylor*; and if Christ say, *Take him Devils, you that Ruled and Deceived him, now Torment him*, all the world cannot rescue one such soul. It will be in vain to look about for help. Alas there is none but Christ can help you ; and he will not, because you refused his help : Nay, we may say, *He cannot* ; not for want of Power ; but because he is True and Just, and therefore will make good that word which you believed not. It is in vain then to cry to hills to fall on you, and the mountains

tains to cover you from the presence of him that sitteth on the Throne. It will be in vain now to Repent, and wish you had not sleighted your salvation, nor sold it for a little pleasure to your flesh. It will be then in vain to cry *Lord, Lord, open to us ; O spare us ; O pity us ; O do not cast us into these hideous flames ! Do not turn us among Devils ! do not Torment thy Redeemed ones in this fire !* All this will be then too late.

Poor sinner, whoever thou art that readest or hearest these lines, I beseech thee in compassion to thy soul, Consider, How fearful the case of that man will be, that is newly doomed to the *Everlasting fire*, and is haled to the Execution without Remedy ! And what mad men are those that now do no more to prevent such a misery, when they might do it on such easie terms, and now have so fair an opportunity in their hands ?

The time was when Repentance might have done thee good : but *Then* all thy Repentings be in vain. *Now* while the day of thy Visitation lasteth, hadst thou but a heart to pray and cry for mercy, in faith and fervency through Christ, thou mightest be heard. But then Praying and Crying will do no good, shouldst thou roar out in the extremity of thy horror and amazement, and beseech the Lord Jesus but to for-

give thee one sin, or to send thee on earth once more, and to try thee once again in the flesh, whether thou wouldst not love him, and lead an holy life, it would be all in vain. Shouldst thou beseech him by all the mercifulness of his nature, by all his sufferings and bloody death, by all the merciful promises of his Gospel, it would be all in vain. Nay, shouldst thou beg but one daies reprieval, or to stay one hour before thou were cast into those flames, it would not be heard ; it would do thee no good. How earnestly did a deceased Gentleman, *Luke 16. 24.* beg of *Abraham* for one drop of water from the tip of *Lazarus's* finger to cool his tongue, because he was tormented in the flame ? And what the better was he ? He was sent to Remember that he had his Good things in this life ; and that *Remembrance* would torment him more. And do not wonder or think much at this, that Christ will not then be intreated by the ungodly. You shall then have a *Remember* too from Christ or Conscience. He may soon stop thy mouth, and leave thee speechless, and say, *Remember, man, that I did one day send thee a Message of peace, and thou wouldst not hear it. I once did stoop to Beseech thee to return. and thou wouldst not hear. I besought thee by the tender mercies of God ; I besought thee by all the Love that I had shewed these ; by my holy Life ; by my cur-*

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sed Death: by the Riches of my Grace: by the offers of my Glory: and I could not get thee to forsake the world, to deny the flesh, to leave one beloved sin for all this! I besought thee over and over again! I sent many a Minister to thee in my name: I waited on thee many a day, and year, and all would not do: thou wouldst not Consider, Return and Live: And now it is too late: my sentence is past, and cannot be recalled: Away from me thou worker of iniquity, Mat. 7. 22, 23.

Ah Sirs, what a case then is the poor desperate sinner left in! How can I write this, or how can you that read or hear it, without trembling once think of the Condition that such forlorn wretches will be in! When they look above them, and see the God that hath forsaken them, because they forsook him first; when they look about them, and see the Saints on one hand whom they despised, now sentenced unto Glory: and the wicked on the other hand whom they accompanied and imitated, now Judged with them to everlasting misery: when they look below them, and see the flames that they must abide in, even for evermore: and when the Devils begin to hale them to the Execution: Oh poor souls! Now what would they give for a Christ, for a promise, for a time of Repentance, for a Sermon of mercy, which once they slept under, or made no account of! How is the case

case altered now with them ! who would think that these are the same men, that made light of all this on earth, that so stoutly scorned the reproofs of the word, that would be worldly, and fleshly, and drunk, and proud, let Preachers say what they would ; and perhaps hated those that did give them warning. Now they are of another minde ; but all too late. Oh were there any place for Resistance, how would they draw back, and lay hold of any thing, before they would be dragged away into those flames ! But there is no resisting ; Satans Temptations might have been resisted, but his Executions cannot ; Gods Judgements might have been Prevented by Faith and Prayer, Repentance and a holy life : but they cannot be resisted when they are not prevented. Glad would the miserable sinner be, if he might but turn to *nothing*, and cease to *be* ; or that he might be any thing rather than a reasonable creature : but these wishes are all in vain. *There is one Time, and one Way of a sinners Deliverance ; if he fail in that one, he perisheth for ever : all the world cannot help him after that. 2 Cor. 6. 2. I have heard thee in a time accepted : and in the day of salvation have I succored thee : Behold now is the Accepted time : behold now is the day of salvation.* Now he saith, *Rev. 3. 20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; If any man hear my voice and*

and open the door, I will come to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. But for the time to come hereafter, hear what he saith, Prov. I. 24, 25, 26. Because I have called, and ye Refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsels, and would none of my Reproof: I also will laugh at your Calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as Desolation, and your destruction cometh a whirlwind: when distress and anguish cometh upon you: then shall they call upon me, but I will not Answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me, for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; They would none of my counsels: they despised all my Reproofs; therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices; for the Turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them; But who so harkeneth to me, shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil. I have recited all these words that you may see and consider, whether I have spoke any other thing than God himself hath plainly told you of.

Having said this much of the Certainty of the Execution, I should next have spoke somewhat of the manner and the Instruments, and have shewed how God will be for ever the
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Principal Cause, and Satan and their own Consciences the Instruments, in part : and in what manner Conscience will do its part, and how impossible it will be to quiet or resist it. But having spoke so much of all this already elsewhere, as is said before, I will forbear here to repeat it, leaving the Reader that desireth it, there to peruse it.

The Uses.

Use. 1. **B**Eloved hearers, it was not to fill your fancies with news that God sent me hither this day : nor to tell you of matters that nothing concern you : nor by some terrible words to bring you to an hours amazement and no more : But it is to tell you of things that your eyes shall see, and to foretell you of your danger while it may be prevented, that your precious souls may be saved at the last, and you may stand before God with comfort at that day : But because this will not be every mans case, no nor the case of most, I must in the name of Christ desire you to make this day an enquiry into your own souls, and as in the presence of God let your hearts make answer to these few Questions which I shall propound and debate with you.

Qⁿ. 1.

Qu. 1. **D**O you soundly Believe this Do-
 ctrine which I have preached to
 you? What say you Sirs? do you verily Believe
 it as a most certain Truth, that you and I, and
 all the world must stand at Gods barr and be
 Judged to everlasting Joy or Torment? I
 hope you do all *in some sort* Believe this: but
 blame me not if I be jealous whether you *sound-*
ly believe it, while we see in the world so lit-
 tle of the effect of such a Belief. I confess I am
 forced to think that there is more infidelity
 then faith among us, when I see more ungod-
 lyness then godlyness among us: And I can
 hardly believe *that* man that will say or swear
 that he believeth these things, and yet liveth as
 carelessly and carnally as an Infidel. I know
 that no man can love to be damned; yea I
 know that every man that hath a reasonable
 soul, hath naturally some love to himself, and a
 fear of a danger which he verily apprehendeth;
 he therefore that liveth without all fear, I must
 think liveth without all apprehension of his
 danger. Custom hath taught men to hold these
 things as the Opinion of the Country; but if
 men soundly believed them, surely we should
 see stranger effects of such a faith, then in the
 most

most we do see. Doth the sleepy soul that liveth in security, and followeth this world as eagerly as if he had no greater matters to mind ; that never once trembled at the thoughts of this great day, nor once asked his own soul in good sadness, *My soul, How dost thou think then to escape ?* I say, doth this man believe that he is going to this Judgement ? Well, Sirs, whether you believe it or not, you will find it true ; and believe it you must before you can be safe. For if you do not Believe it, you will never make ready. Let me therefore perswade you in the fear of God to consider, that it is a matter of undoubted Truth.

1. Consider that it is the expresse word of the God of Truth; revealed in Scripture as plainly as you can desire. So that you cannot be unbelieving without denying Gods Word, or giving him the lye, *Mat. 13. 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 49, 50. Mat. 25. throughout, Rom. 2. 5. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16. and 1. 32. John. 5. 28, 29. The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth : they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the Resurrection of damnation, Heb 9. 27. It is appointed to all men once to dye, and after this, the Judgement. Rom. 14. 9, 12. So then every one of us shall give Account of himself to God, Rev. 20. 12. And I saw*

saw the dead, small and great stand before God: and the Books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the Book of life; and the dead were Judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. Mat. 12. 36.

37. But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of Judgement: For by thy words thou shalt be Justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Many more most expresse Texts of Scripture do put the Truth of this Judgement out of all question to all that believe the Scripture, and will understand it. There is no place left for a Controversie in the point: It is made as sure to us as the Word of the living God can make it: And he that will question that, what will he Believe? What say you Sirs! Dare you doubt of this which the God of Heaven hath so positively affirmed? I hope you dare not.

2. Consider, it is a master part of your faith, if you are Christians, and a fundamental Article of your Creed, that Christ shall come again to Judge the quick and the dead. So that you must Believe it, or renounce your Christianity, and then you renounce Christ and all the hopes of mercy that you have in him. Its impossible that you should soundly Believe in Christ, and not believe his Judgement and Life Everlasting: because as he came to bring
Life

Life and immortality to light in the Gospel, *2 Tim.* 1. 10. so it was the end of his Incarnation, Death and Resurrection, to bring you thither; and its part of his honour and office which he purchased with his blood, to be the Lord and Judge of all the world, *Rom.* 14. 9. *Joh.* 5. 22. If therefore you believe not heartily this Judgement, deal plainly and openly, and say you are Infidels, and cast away the hypocritical vizard of Christianity, and let us know you, and take you as you are.

3. Consider that it is a Truth that is known by the very light of nature, that there shall be a happiness for the Righteous, and a misery for the wicked after this life: which is evident,

1. In that we have undenyable natural reason for it. 1. God is the Righteous governor of the world, and therefore must make a difference among his Subjects, according to the nature of their waies: which we see is not done here, where the wicked prosper, and the good are afflicted; therefore it must be hereafter.

2. We see there is a necessity that God should make promises and threatnings of everlasting happiness or misery, for the right governing of the world: for we certainly perceive that no lower things will keep men from destroying all humane society, and living worse then

then bruit beasts; and if there be a necessity of making such threats and promises, then there is certainly a necessity of fulfilling them. For God needeth no lye or means of deceiving, to rule the world.

2. And as we see it by Reason, so by certain experience, that this is discernable by the light of nature; for all the world, or almost all do believe it. Even those nations where the Gospel never came, and have nothing but what they have by nature, even the most barbarous Indians acknowledge some life after this, and a difference of men according as they are here: therefore you must believe thus much, or renounce your common reason and humanity, as well as your Christianity. Let me therefore perswade you all in the fear of God to confirm your souls in the belief of this, as if you had heard Christ or an Angel from Heaven say to you, *Oh man, thou art hasting to Judgement.*

Qu. 2. **M**Y next Question is, *whether you do ever soberly consider of this great day?* Sirs, do you use when you are alone to think with your selves, how certain and how dreadful it will be? how fast it is coming on? and what you shall do? and what answer you mean to make at that day? are your minds

taken up with these considerations ? Tell me, is it so, or not ?

Alas Sirs ! Is this a matter to be forgotten ? Is not that man even worse then mad, that is going to Gods judgement and never thinks of it ? when if they were to be tryed for their lives at the next Assize, they would think of it, and think again, and cast 100 times which way to escape. Methinks you should rather forget to go to bed at night, or to eat your meat, or do your work, then forget so great a matter as this.

Truly, I have often in my serious thoughts been ready to wonder that men can think of almost any thing else, when they have so great a thing to think of. What, forget that which you must remember for ever ! forget that which should force remembrance, yea and doth force it with some; whether they will or not ! A poor despairing soul cannot forget it : He thinks which way ever he goes he is ready to be judged. Oh therefore Beloved, Fix these thoughts as deep in your hearts as thoughts can go. Oh be like that holy man, that thought which way ever he went, he heard the Trumpet sound, and the voice of the Angel calling to the world, *Arise ye dead, and come to Judgement.* You have warning of it from God and man, to cause you to remember it; do not then forget it. It will be a cold excuse
another

another day, *Lord, I forgate this day, or else I might have been ready* : you dare not sure trust to such excuses.

Qu. 3. **M**Y next question to you, is, *How are you affected with the Consideration of this day?* Barely to think of it will not serve : to think of such a day as this with a dull and senseless heart, is a sign of fearful stupidity. Did the knees of King *Belshazzar* knock together with trembling, when he saw the hand-writing on the wall? *Dan. 5. 6.* How then should thy heart be affected that seeth the hand-writing of God as a summons to his bar?

When I began to preach of these things long ago, I confess the matters seemed to me so terrible, that I was afraid that people would have run out of theirs wits with fear ; but a little experience shewed me, that many are like a dog that is bred up in a forge or furnace, that being used to it, can sleep though the hammers are beating, and the fire and hot iron flaming about him, when another that had never seen it, would be amazed at the sight. When men have heard us 7 years together ; yea 20 years, to talk of a day of Judgement, and they see it not, nor feel any hurt, they think it is but talk, and begin to make nothing of it. This is their thanks to

God for his patience : Because his Sentence is not executed speedily, therefore their hearts are set in them to do evil, *Eccles. 8. 11.* As if God were slack of his promise, as some men account slackness, *2 Pet. 3. 9.* when one day with him is as a 1000. years, and a 1000. years as one day. What if we tell you 20 years together that you must dye, will you not believe us, because you have lived so long and seen no death comming?

Three or four things there be that should bring any matter to the heart. 1. If it be a matter of exceeding weight. 2. If it concern not others only, but our selves. 3. If it be certain. 4. If neer.

All these things are here to be found, and therefore how should your hearts be moved at the Consideration of this great day!

1. What matter can be mentioned with the Tongue of man of greater moment? For the poor creature to stand before his Maker and Redeemer, to be judged to everlasting Joy or Torment? Alas! all the matters of this world are playes, and toyes, and dreams to this; Matters of profit or disprofit are nothing to it, Matters of credit or discredit are unworthy to be named with it; Matters of temporal life or death are nothing to it. We see the poor brut beasts go every day to the slaughter, and we

we make no great matter of it, though their life be as dear to them as ours to us. To be Judged to an *Everlasting* death or torment, this is the great danger that one would think should shake the stoutest heart to consider it, and awake the dullest sinner to prevent it.

2. Its a matter that concerneth every one of *your selves*, and every man or woman that ever lived upon the earth, or ever shall do; I am not speaking to you of the affairs of some far Country that are nothing to you but only to marvail at; which you never saw, nor ever shall do; no; It is thy own self man or woman that hearest me this day that shalt as surely appear before the Judgement-seat of Christ, as the Lord liveth, and as he is true and faithful; and that is as sure as thou livest on this earth, or as the heaven is over thee. That man that heareth all this with the most careless blockish heart, shall be awakened and stand with the rest at that day; that man that never thought of it, but spent his time in worldly matters, shall leave all and there appear; that man that will not believe these things to be true, but make a jest of them, shall see and feel what he would not Believe, and *he* also shall be there; the *godly* that waited in hope for that day, as the day of their full Deliverance and Coronation, they shall be there; Those that have lain in the dust

these 5000. years shall rise again, and all stand there. Hearer, whoever thou art, believe it, thou maist better think to live without meat, to see without light, to escape death, and abide for ever on earth, then to keep away from that Appearance. Willing or unwilling, thou *shalt* be there. And should not a matter then that so concerneth *thy self*, go neer to thy heart, and awake thee from thy security ?

3. That it is a matter of unquestionable certainty, I have partly shewed you already, and more would do if I were preaching to known Infidels. If the careless world had any just reason to think it were uncertain, their carelessness were more excusable. Methinks a man should be affected with that which he is certain shall come to pass, in a manner as if it were now in doing. 1 *Thes.* 5.2. *Ye perfectly know that the day of the Lord so cometh, &c.* saith the Apostle.

4. This day is not only *certain*, but it is *neer* ; and therefore should affect you the more. I confess, if it were never so far off, yet seeing it will come at last, it should be carefully regarded : But when the Judge is at the door, *James* 5.9. and we are almost at the bar, and it is so short a time to this Assize, what soul that is not dead will be secure ?

Alas, Sirs ! what is a little time when it is gone ? how quickly shall you and I be all in
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another world, and our souls receive their particular Judgement, and so wait till the body be raised and judged to the same Condition? It is not a 100. years in all likelihood, till every soul of us shall be in heaven or hell: and its like, not half or a quarter of that time, but it will be so with the greater part of us: and what is a year or two or a 100.? how speedily is it come? how many a soul that is now in heaven or hell, within a 100 years dwelt in the places that you now dwell in, and sate in the seats you now sit in? And now their time is past, what is it? Alas; how quickly will it be so with us! You know not when you go to bed, but you may be judged by the next morning: or when you rise, but you may be judged before night: but certainly you know that shortly it will be; and should not this then be laid to heart? Yea the General judgement will not be long: For certainly we live in the end of the world.

Qu. 4. **M**Y next Question is, *Whether are you ready for this dreadful Judgement when it comes, or not?* Seeing it is *your selves* then must be tryed, I think it concerns you to see that you be prepared. How often hath Christ warned us in the Gospel, that we be *alwaies ready*, because we know not the day or hour of his coming? *Matth. 24. 44. 42. and 25. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 6.* and told us how sad a time it will be to those that are unready? *Mat. 25. 11, 12.* Did men but well know what a meeting and greeting there will be between Christ and an unready soul, it would sure startle them, and make them look about them. What say you Beloved Hearers, are you *ready* for judgement, or are you not? Methinks a man that knoweth he shall be judged, should ask himself the question every day of his life; Am I ready to give up my Account to God? Do not you use to ask this of your own hearts? unless you be careless whether you be saved or damned, me thinks you should, and ask it *seriously*.

Qu. But who be they that are ready? how shall I know whether I be ready or not?

Answ. There is a twofold readiness. *1.* When you

you are in a *safe* case. 2. When you are in a *comfortable* case, in regard of that day. The latter is very *desirable*, but the first is of *absolute necessity* : this therefore is it that you must principally enquire after.

In General, all those, and only those are ready for Judgement, who shall be justified and saved, and not condemned when Judgement comes ; They that have a good cause in a Gospel sense. It may be known before hand who these are ; for Christ Judgeth, as I told you, by his Law. And therefore find out whom it is that the Law of grace doth justify or condemn, and you may certainly know whom the Judge will Justify or condemn ; for he Judgeth righteously.

If you further ask me who these are ; remember that I told you before that every man that is Personally righteous by fulfilling the Conditions of Salvation in the Gospel, shall be saved ; and he that is found unrighteous, as having not fulfilled them, shall perish at that day,

Qu. *Who are these ?*

Ans^r. I will tell you them in a few words, lest you should forget, because it is a matter that your Salvation or Damnation dependeth upon.

1. The soul that unfeignedly repenteth of his former sinful course, and turneth from it in

heart and life, and loveth the way of godliness which he hated, and hateth the way of sin which he loved, and is become throughly a New Creature, being born again and sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, shall be Justified : but all others shall certainly be condemned.

Good news to repenting converted sinners : but sad to Impenitent, and him that knows not what this means.

2. That soul that feeling his misery under sin, and the power of Satan, and the wrath of God, doth believe what Christ hath done and suffered for mans restauration and Salvation, and thankfully accepteth him as his only Saviour and Lord, on the terms that he is offered in the Gospel, and to those ends, even to Justifie him, and sanctifie and guide him, and bring him at last to everlasting glory; that soul shall be Justified at Judgement : and he that doth not, shall be condemned.

Or in short, in Scripture phrase, *He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned, Mar. 16. 16.*

3. The soul that hath had so much knowledge of the goodness of God, and his love to man in Creation, Redemption, and the following mercies, and hath had so much conviction of the vanity of all creatures, as thereupon to Love God more then *all* things below, so that
be

he hath the chiefeſt room in the heart, and is preferred before all creatures ordinarily in a time of tryal: that ſoul ſhall be Juſtified at Judgement and all others ſhall be condemned.

4. That ſoul that is ſo apprehenſive of the abſolute Soveraignty of God as Creator and Redeemer, and of the Righteouſneſs of his Law, and the Goodneſs of his holy way, as that he is firmly Reſolved to obey him before all others, and doth accordingly give up himſelf to ſtudy his will, of purpoſe that he may obey it, and doth walk in theſe holy waies, and hath ſo far mortified the fleſh, and ſubdued the world and the Devil, that the Authority and Word of God can do more with him, then any other; and doth ordinarily prevail againſt all the perſwaſion and intereſt of the fleſh, ſo that the main ſcope and bent of the heart and life is ſtill for God; and when he ſinneth, he riſeth again by true Repentance; I ſay that ſoul, and that only, ſhall be Juſtified in Judgement, and be ſaved.

5. That ſoul that hath ſuch Believing thoughts of the life to come, that he taketh the promiſed bleſſedneſs for his portion, and is reſolved to venture all elſe upon it, and in hope of this glory, doth ſet light comparatively by all things in this world and waiteth for it as the end of this life, chooſing any ſuffering that
God

God shall call him to, rather then to lose his hopes of that felicity, and thus persevereth to the end: I say that soul, and none but that, shall be Justified in Judgement, and escape Damnation.

In these five marks I have told you truly and briefly, who shall be Justified and saved, and who shall be condemned at the day of Judgement. And if you would have them all in five words, they are but the Description of these five Graces, Repentance, Faith, Love, Obedience, Hope.

But though I have laid these close together for your use, yet lest you should think that in so weighty a case I am too short in the proof of what I so determine of, I will tell you in the expresse words of many Scripture Texts, who shall be Justified, and who shall be condemned.

[*John* 3. 3. Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. *Heb.* 12. 14. Without holiness none shall see God. *Luk.* 13. 3, 5. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. *Acts* 26. 18. I send thee to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an Inheritance among the sanctified by Faith that is in me. *John* 3. 15, 16.

17, 18, 19. Whoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life : he that believeth on him, is not condemned ; he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not Believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God ; and this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil, *Joh* 5. 28, 29. The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good to the Resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the Resurrection of damnation. *Mat* 25. 30. Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth, *Luk* 19. 27. But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me, *Mat* 22. 12, 13. Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment ? And he was speechless. Then said the King to the servants : Bind him hand and foot, and take him way, and cast him into outer darkness, &c. *Mat* 5. 20. For I say unto you, that except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of heaven. *Mat* 7. 21. Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom
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dom of Heaven ; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven. *Heb. 5. 6.* He is become the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. *Rev. 22. 14.* Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the Gate into the City, *Rom. 8. 1. 13.* There is then no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall dye : but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live, *Rom. 8. 9.* If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. *Gal. 5. 18.* But if ye be Led of the Spirit, ye are not under the Law. *Gal. 6. 7, 8.* Be not deceived : God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap ; for he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap Corruption ; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life Everlasting. *Matth. 6. 21.* For where your Treasure is, there will your heart be also,] Read *Psal. 1.* and many other Texts to this purpose, of which some are cited in my Directions for Peace of Conscience ; Dir. 11. p. 115. 116.

And thus I have told you from Gods Word, how you may know whether you are ready for Judgement ; which is the fourth

fourth thing that I would advise you to enquire after.

O Sirs, what shift do you make to keep your souls from Continual Terrours, as long as you remain unready for Judgement? How do you keep the Thoughts of it out of your mind, that they do not break your sleep, and meet you in your business, and haunt you every way you go, while Judgement is so neer, and you are so unready? But I shall proceed to my next Question.

Qu. 5. **A**ND in the last place, to those of you that are not yet Ready, nor in a Condition wherein you may be safe at that day; my Question is, *How are you resolved to prepare for Judgement for the time to come?* Will you do no more than you have done hitherto? Or will you now set your selves with all your might, to make preparation for so great a day? me thinks you should be now past all demurs, delays, or further doubtings about such a business; and by the consideration of what I have said already, you should be fully Resolved to lose no more time, but presently to awake, and set upon the work. Me thinks you should all say, We will do any thing that the Lord shall Direct us to do, rather

rather then we will be unready for this final doom! O that there were but such hearts in you, that you were truly *willing* to follow the gracious Guidance of the Lord, and to use but those sweet and reasonable means which he hath prescribed you in his Word, that you may be ready for that day ! Alas, it is no hard matter for me to tell you, or my self, what it is that we must do, if we will be happy ; and it is no very hard matter to *Do* it so far as we are truly *willing* ; but the difficulty is to be *truly* and *thoroughly willing* to this work. If I shall tell you what you must do for preparation, shall I not lose my labour ? Will you resolve and promise in the strength of Grace, that you will faithfully and speedily endeavour to practise it, whoever shall gainsay it ? Upon hope of this, I will set you down some brief Directions, which you must follow, if ever you will with comfort look the Lord Jesus in the face at the hour of Death, or in the Day of Judgment.

THE first Direction is this, *See that your souls be sincerely established in the Belief of this Judgement and everlasting life:* For if you do not soundly believe it, you will not seriously prepare for it. If you have the Judgement and belief of an Infidel, you cannot have the Heart or the Life of a Christian. Unbelief shuts out the most of the world from heaven: see that it do not so by you. If you say, You cannot Believe what you would: I answer, Feed not your unbelief by wilfulness, or unreasonableness; use Gods means to overcome it, and shut not your eyes against the light, and then try the issue, *Heb. 3. 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.*

THE second Direction. *Labour diligently to have a sound understanding of the nature of the Laws and Judgement of God.* On what terms it is that he dealeth with mankind: and on what terms he will Judge them to Life or Death: and what the Reward and Punishment is. For if you know not the Law by which you must be Judged, you cannot know how to prepare for the Judgement. Study the Scripture
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therefore, and mark who they be that God promiseth to save, and who they be that he threatneth to Condemn. For according to that Word will the Judgement pass.

THE third Direction. *See that you take it as the very business of your Lives, to make ready for that day.* Understand that you have no other business in this world, but what doth necessarily depend on this. What else have you to do, but to provide for everlasting? and to use means to sustain your own bodies and others, of purpose for this work, till it be happily done? Live therefore as men that make this the main scope and care of their lives; and let all things else come in but on the by. Remember every morning when you awake, that you must spend that day in preparation for your Account, and that God doth give it you for that end. When you go to bed, examine your hearts, what you have done that day in preparation for your last Day: And take that time as lost which doth nothing to this end.

THE fourth Direction. *Use frequently to think of the Certainty, nearness and dreadfulness of that day, to keep Life in your Affections and Endeavours; lest by Inconsiderateness your souls grow stupid and negligent. Otherwise, because it is out of sight, the heart will be apt to grow hardened and secure. And do not think of it sleightly, as a common thing, but purposely set your selves to think of it, that it may rouze you up to such Affections and Endeavours as in some measure are answerable to the nature of the thing.*

THE fifth Direction. *Labour to have a lively feeling on thy heart, of the evil and weight of that sin which thou art guilty of, and of the misery into which it hath brought thee, and would further bring thee if thou be not delivered, and so to feel the need of a Deliverer. This must prepare thee to partake of Christ now; and if thou partake not of him now, thou canst not be saved by him Then. It is these souls that now make light*

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of their sin and misery, that must then feel them so *heavy*, as to be pressed by them into the infernal flames. And those that *now* feel little need of a Saviour, they shall *then* have none to save them, when they feel their need.

THE sixth Direction. *Understand and Believe the sufficiency of that Ransom and Satisfaction to Justice, which Christ hath made for thy sins and for the world, and how freely and universally it is offered in the Gospel. Thy sin is not incurable or unpardonable, nor thy misery remediless; God hath provided a remedy in his Son Christ, and brought it so neer thy hands, that nothing but thy neglecting, or wilful refusing it, can deprive thee of the Benefit. Settle thy soul in this belief.*

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THE seventh Direction. *Understand and Believe, that for all Christs satisfaction, there is an Absolute Necessity of sound Faith and Repentance to be in thy own self, before thou canst be a member of him, or be Pardoned, Adopted, or Justified by his blood. He dyed not for final Infidelity and Impenitency, as predominant in any soul. As the Law of his Father which occasioned his Suffering, required perfect Obedience, or suffering : So his own Law, which he hath made for the conveyance of his Benefits, doth require yet true Faith and Repentance of men themselves, before they shall be pardoned by him ; and sincere Obedience and Perseverance, before they shall be glorified.*

THE eighth Direction. *Rest not therefore in an unrenewed, unsanctified state; that is, till this Faith and Repentance be wrought on thy own soul, and thou be truly broken off from thy former sinful course, and from all things in this world; and art Dedicated, Devoted and Resigned unto God. Seeing this change must be made, and these graces must be had, or thou must certainly perish: in the fear of God, see that thou give no ease to thy minde till thou art thus changed. Be content with nothing till this be done. Delay not another day. How canst thou live merrily, or sleep quietly in such a Condition, as if thou shouldst dye in it, thou shouldst perish for ever? Especially when thou art every hour uncertain whether thou shalt see another hour, and not be presently snatcht away by death? Methinks while thou art in so sad a case, which way ever thou art going, or what ever thou art doing, it should still come into thy thoughts, Ob what if I should dye before I be Regenerate, and have part in Christ!*

THE ninth Direction. *Let it be the daily care of thy soul, to mortifie thy fleshly desires, and overcome this world; and live as in a continual Conflict with Satan, which will not be ended till thy life do end.* If any thing destroy thee by drawing away thy heart from God, it will be thy carnal self, thy fleshly desires, and the allurements of this world, which is the matter that they feed upon. This therefore must be the earnest work of thy life, to subdue this flesh, and set light by this world, and resist the Devil, that by these would destroy thee. It is the common case of miserable hypocrites, that at first they list themselves under Christ as for a fight, but they presently forget their state and work; and when they are once in their own conceit Regenerate, they think themselves so safe, that there is no further danger; and thereupon they do lay down their Arms, and take that which they miscall their Christian Liberty, and indulge and please that flesh which they promised to mortifie, and close with the world which they promised to contemn, and so give up themselves to the Devil, whom they promised

to fight against. If once you apprehend that all your Religion lieth in meer Believing, that all shall go well with you, and that the bitterness of death is past, and in a forbearance of some disgraceful sins, and being much in the Exercise of your Gifts, and in external waies of Duty, and giving God a Cheap and Plausible obedience in those things only which the Flesh can spare; you are then faln into that deceitful hypocrisie, which will as surely condemn you, as open prophaneness, if you get not out of it. You must live as in a fight, or you cannot overcome. You *must* live loose from all things in *this world*, if you will be ready for *another*. You *must* not live after the flesh, but mortifie it by the Spirit, if you would not dye, but live for ever, *Rom.8.13*. These things are not indifferent, but of flat necessity.

THE tenth Direction. *Do all your works as men that must be judged for them.* It is not enough (at least in point of Duty and Comfort) that you Judge this preparation in General to be the main business of your lives, but you should also order your

your *particular Actions* by these Thoughts, and measure them by their *Respects* to this approaching Day. Before you venture on them, enquire whether they will bear weight in Judgement, and be sweet or bitter when they are brought to tryal? Both for matter and manner, this must be observed, Oh that you would Remember this when Temptations are upon you, When you are Tempted to give up your minds to the world, and drown your selves in earthly cares, will you bethink you soberly whether you would hear of this at Judgement? and whether the world will be then as sweet as now? and whether this be the best preparation for your Tryal: When you are Tempted to be Drunk, or to spend your precious time in Alehouses, or vain unprofitable company, or at Cards or Dice, or any sinful or needless sports; bethink you then, Whether this will be comfortable at the Reckoning? and whether time be no more worth to one that is so neer eternity, and must make so strict an account of his Hours? and whether there be not many better works before you, in which you might spend your time to your greater advantage, and to your greater comfort when it comes to a Review? When you
are

are tempted to wantonness, fornication, or any other fleshly intemperance, bethink you soberly, with what face these Actions will appear at Judgement, and whether they will be *then* pleasant or displeasing to you? So when you are tempted to neglect the daily worshipping of God in your families, and the Catechising and Teaching of your children or servants, especially on the Lords Day, bethink your selves then, What account you will give of this to Christ, when he that entrusted you with the care of your children and servants, shall call you to a reckoning for the performance of that trust?

The like must be Remembred in the very manner of our Duties. How diligently should a Minister study? how earnestly should he perswade? how unweariedly should he bear all oppositions and ungrateful returns? and how carefully should he watch over each particular soul of his charge (as far as is possible) when he Remembers that he must shortly be Accountable for all in Judgement? And how importunate should we all be with sinners for their Conversion, when we consider that we our selves also must shortly be Judged? Can a man be cold and dead in prayer, that hath any
true

true apprehension of that Judgement upon his mind, where he must be accountable for all his prayers and performances? O Remember, and seriously Remember, when you stand before the Minister to hear the word, and when you are on your knees to God in prayer, in what a manner that same person, even your selves must shortly stand at the Barr of the dreadful God ! Did these thoughts get throughly to mens hearts, they would waken them out of their sleepy Devotions, and acquaint them that it is a serious business to be a Christian. How careful should we be of our thoughts and words, if we believingly remembred that we must be accountable for them all! How carefully should we consider what we do with our Riches, and with all that God giveth us, and how much more largely should we expend it for his service in works of Piety and Charity, if we believingly remembred that we must be Judged according to what we have done, and give account of every Talent that we receive? Certainly the believing consideration of Judgement, might make us all better Christians then we are, and keep our lives in a more innocent and profitable frame.

THE eleventh Direction. *As you will certainly renew your failings in this life, so be sure that you daily renew your Repentance, and fly daily to Christ for a renewed pardon, that no sin may leave its sting in your souls.* It is not your first pardon that will serve the turn for your latter sins. Not that you must *Purpose* to sin, and *Purpose* to repent when you have done, as a Remedy: for that is an hypocritical and wicked *purpose* of repenting, which is made a means to maintain us in our sins; But sin must be avoided as far as we can; and Repentance and Faith in the blood of Christ must remedy that which we could not avoid. The Righteousness of pardon in Christs blood is useful to us only so far as we are sinners; and cometh in where our Imperfect Inherent Righteousness doth come short; but must not be purposely chosen before innocency: I mean, we must rather choose, as far as we can, to obey and be innocent, than to sin and be pardoned, if we were sure of pardon.

THE twelfth Direction. In this vigilant, obedient, penitent course, with confidence upon God as a Father, Rest upon the Promise of Acceptance and Remission, through the Merits and Intercession of him that Redeemed you ; Look up in hope to the Glory that is before you, and believe that God will make good his Word, and the patient expectation of the righteous shall not be in vain. Cheerfully hold on in the work that you have begun : and as you serve a better master than you did before your change, so serve him with more willingness, gladness and delight. Do not entertain hard Thoughts of him, or of his service, but rejoyce in your unspeakable happiness of being admitted into his family and favour through Christ. Do not serve him in drooping dejection and discouragement, but with Love, and Joy, and filial Fear. Keep in the Communion of his Saints, where he is cheerfully and faithfully praised and honoured, and where is the greatest visible similitude of heaven upon earth ; especially in the celebration of the Sacrament of Christs Supper, where he seals

seals up a Renewed pardon in his blood, and where unanimously we keep the Remembrance of his Death until he come. Do not cast your selves out of the Communion of the Saints, from whom to be cast out by just Censure and Exclusion, is a dreadful emblem and fore-runner of the Judgement to come, where the ungodly shall be cast out of the presence of Christ and his Saints for ever.

I have now finished the Directions, which I tender to you for your preparation for the Day of the Lord ; and withall my whole Discourse on this weighty point. What effect all this shall have upon your hearts, the Lord knows; it is not in my power to determine. If you are so far blinded and hardened by sin and Satan, as to make light of all this, or coldly to commend the Doctrine, while you go on to the end in your carnal worldly condition as before; I can say no more, but tell thee again, that Judgement is neer, when thou wilt bitterly bewail all this too late. And among all the rest of the Evidence that comes in against thee, this book will be one, which shall testify to thy face before Angels, and men, that thou wast told of that Day, and intreated to prepare.

But if the Lord shall shew thee so much mercy as to open thy eyes, and break in
upon

upon thy heart, and by sober Consideration turn it to himself, and cause thee faithfully to take the warning that hath here been given thee, and to obey these Directions, I dare assure thee from the word of the Lord, that this Judgement which will be so dreadful to the ungodly, and the beginning of their endless terror and misery, will be as joyful to thee, and the beginning of thy glory. The Saviour that thou hast believed in, and sincerely obeyed will not condemn thee. *Psal.* 1. 5, 6. *Rom.* 8. 1. *Iohn* 3. 16. It is part of his business to Justifie thee before the world, and to glorifie his merits, his Kingly power, his holyness, and his rewarding Justice in thy Absolution and Salvation. He will account it a righteous thing to recompence Tribulation to thy Troublers, and Rest to thy self; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power: Even then shall he come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, in that day; Even because his servants Testimony, and his Spirits among them was believed,

believed, 2 *Thes.* 1. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. That day will be the great marriage of the Lamb, and the Reception of thee, and all the Saints into the glory of thy beloved, to which they had a Right at their first Consent and Contract upon earth : And when the Bridegroom comes, thou who art Ready shalt go into the Marriage, when the door shall be shut against the sleepy negligent world ; and though they Cry, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, they shall be repulsed with a *Verily I know you not*, *Mat.* 25. 10, 11, 12, 13. For this day which others fear, mayst thou long, and hope, and pray, and wait, and comfort thy self in all troubles with the remembrance of it, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56, 57, 58. 1 *Thes.* 4. 17, 18. If thou were ready to be offered to death for Christ, or when the time of thy departing is at hand, thou maist look back on the good fight which thou hast fought, and on the course which thou hast finished, and on the faith which thou hast kept, and mayst confidently conclude, that henceforth there is laid up for thee a *Crown of Righteousness*, which *The Lord the Righteous Judge* shall give thee at that day : and not to thee only, but unto all them also that Love his Appearing, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7, 8. *Even so, Come Lord Jesus*, *Rev.* 22. 20.

FINIS.

Making light of
C H R I S T
AND
S A L V A T I O N
Too oft the Issue of Go-
spel-Invitations.

Manifested in a **S E R M O N** preach-
ed at *Laurence Iury* in *London*.

By **R I C H. B A X T E R**, Teacher
of the Church of Christ at *Keder-*
minster in *Worcester-shire*.

Heb. 2. 34. *How shall we escape, if we neg-*
lect so great salvation?

L O N D O N,
Printed by *R. White*, for *Nevil Simmons*
Book-seller in *Kedermister*, 1658.



To the Reader.

Reader.

BEing called on in London to Preach, when I had no time to study, I was fain to preach some Sermons that I had preached in the Country a little before. This was one, which I preached at *S. Laurence*, in the Church where my Reverend and faithful Brother in Christ; *Mr. Richard Vines* is Pastor: when I came home, I was followed by such importunitics by Letters

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to

To the Reader.

to Print the Sermon, that I have yielded thereunto ; though I know not fully the ground of their desires. Seeing it must abroad, will the Lord but bless it to the cure of thy contempt of Christ and Grace, how comfortable may the occasion prove to thee and me ! It is the sleighting of Christ and Salvation, that undoes the world. Oh happy man if thou scape but this sin ! Thousands do split their souls on this Rock which they should build them on. Look into the world, among rich and poor, high and low, young and old, and see whether it appear not by the whole scope of their

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To the Reader.

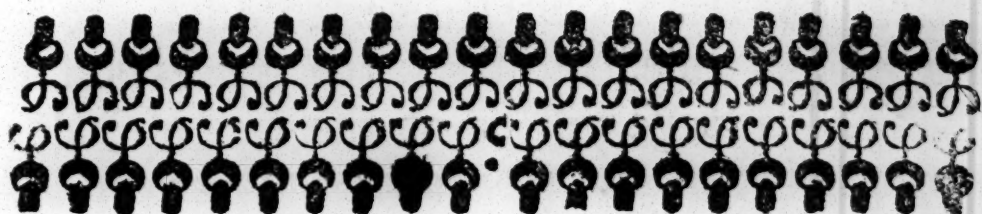
Conversations, that they set more by something else than Christ: and for all the proclamations of his Grace in the Gospel, and our common professing our selves to be his Disciples, and to Believe the Glorious things that he hath promised us in another world, whether it yet appear not by the deceitfulness of our service, by our heartless endeavours to obtain his Kingdom, and by our busie and delightful following of the world, that the most who are called Christians, do yet in their hearts make light of Christ? And if so, what wonder if they perish by their contempt! Wilt

To the Reader.

thou but soberly peruse this short Discourse, and consider well as thou readest, of its truth and weight, till thy heart be sensible what a sin it is to make light of Christ and thy own salvation, and till the Lord that bought thee be advanced in the estimation and affections of thy soul, thou shalt hereby rejoyce, and fulfill the desires of

Thy servant in the faith,

Rich. Baxter.



Mat. 22.5. *But they made light of it.*



HE blessed son of God, that thought it not enough to die for the world, but would himself also be the Preacher of Grace and Salvation, doth comprize in this Parable the summe of his Gospel. By the King that is here said to make the marriage, is meant God the Father that sent his Son into the world to cleanse them from their sins, and espouse them to himself. By his Son for whom the Marriage is made, is meant the Lord Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God, who took to his God-head the nature of man, that he might be capable of being their Redeemer when they had lost themselves in sin. By the Marriage is meant The Conjunction of Christ to the soul of sinners, when he giveth up himself to them to be their Saviour, and they give up them-
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selves to him as his Redeemed ones, to be saved and ruled by him; the perfection of which Marriage will be at the day of Judgment, when the Conjunction between the whole Church and Christ shall be solemnized. The word here translated *Marriage*, rather signifieth the *Marriage Feast*; and the meaning is, that the world is invited by the Gospel to come in and partake of Christ and Salvation, which comprehendeth both Pardon, Justification and Right to Salvation, and all other Priviledges of the Members of Christ. The *Invitation* is Gods offer of Christ and Salvation in the Gospel; the servants that Invite them, are the Preachers of the Gospel, who are sent forth by God to that end; the preparation for the Feast there mentioned, is, The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the enacting of a Law of Grace, and opening a way for revolting sinners to return to God. There is a mention of sending second Messengers, because God useth not to take the first denial, but to exercise his patience till sinners are Obstinate. The first persons invited are the Jews; upon their Obstinate Refusal they are sentenced to punishment; and the Gentiles are invited, and not only invited, but by powerful Preaching, and Miracles, and Effectual Grace compelled,

led, that is, infallibly prevailed with to come in. The number of them is so great, that the house is filled with the Guests; Many come sincerely, not only looking at the pleasure of the Feast, that is, at the Pardon of sin, and Deliverance from the wrath of God, but also at the honour of the Marriage, that is of the Redeemer, and their profession by giving up themselves to an holy Conversation; But some come in only for the Feast, that is Justification by Christ, having not the wedding Garment of sound Resolution for Obedience in their life, and looking only at themselves in Believing, and not to the glory of their Redeemer; and these are sentenced to everlasting misery, and speed as ill as those that came not in at all; seeing a Faith that will not work, is but like that of the Devil; and they that look to be pardoned and saved by it, are mistaken, as *James* sheweth, 2.24.

The words of my Text contain a Narration of the ill entertainment that the Gospel findeth with many to whom it is sent, even after a first and second invitation, They make light of it, and are taken up with other things. Though it be the Jews that were first guilty, they have too many followers among us Gentiles to this day.

Doct.

Doct. For all the wonderful love and mercy that God hath manifested in giving his Son to be the Redeemer of the world, and which the Son hath manifested in Redeeming them by his Blood; for all his full preparation by being a sufficient sacrifice for the sins of all; for all his Personal excellencies, and that full and glorious Salvation that he hath procured, and for all his free offers of these, and frequent and earnest Invitation of sinners: yet many do make light of all this, and prefer their worldly enjoyments before it. The ordinary entertainment of all is by contempt.

Not that all do so, or that all continue to do so who were once guilty of it: for God hath his chosen whom he will compell to come in. But till the Spirit of grace overpower the dead and obstinate hearts of men, they hear the Gospel as a common story, and the great matters contained in it go not to the heart.

The Method in which I shall handle this Doctrine, is this.

1, I shall shew you what it is that men make light of.

2. What this sin of making light of it is.

3. The cause of the sin.

4. The use of the Doctrine.

1. **T**HE thing that carnal hearers make light of, is, 1. The Doctrine of the Gospel it self, which they hear regardlessly. 2. The benefit offered them therein: which are, 1. Christ himself. 2. The benefits which he giveth.

Concerning Christ himself, the Gospel 1. Declareth his person and nature, and the great things that he hath done and suffered for man: his Redeeming him from the wrath of God by his blood, and procuring a grant of salvation with himself. Futhermore, The same Gospel maketh an offer of Christ to sinners, that if they will accept him on his easie and reasonable terms, he will be their Saviour, the Physian of their souls, their husband and their head.

2. The benefits that he offereth them, are these. 1. That with these Blessed Relations to him, himself and interest in him, they shall have the pardon of all their sins past, and be saved from Gods wrath, and be set in a sure way of obtaining a pardon for all the sins that they shall commit hereafter, so they do but obey sincerely, and turn not again to the rebellion of their unregeneracy. 2. They shall have the Spirit to become

come their Guide and Sanctifier, and to dwell in their souls, and help them against their enemies, and conform them more and more to his Image, and heal their diseases, and bring them back to God. 3. They shall have right to everlasting glory when this life is ended, and shall be raised up thereto at the last; Besides many excellent privileges in the way, in Means, preservation, and Provision, and the foretaste of what they shall enjoy hereafter: all these Benefits the Gospel offereth to them that will have Christ on his reasonable terms. The summ of all is in 1 John 5. 11, 12. *This is the Record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.*

II. **W**hat this sin of the making light of the Gospel is? 1. To make light of the Gospel, is, to take no great heed to what is spoken, as if it were not a certain Truth, or else were a matter that little concerned them, or as if God had not written these things for them. 2. When the Gospel doth not affect men, or go to their hearts; but though they seem to attend to what

what is said, yet men are not *awakened* by it from their security, nor doth it work in any measure such holy passion in their souls, as matters of such everlasting Consequence should do ; this is making light of the Gospel of Salvation. When we tell men what Christ hath done and suffered for their souls, and it scarce moveth them : We tell them of keen and cutting truths, but nothing will pierce them ; We can make them hear, but we cannot make them feel ; Our words take up in the porch of their ears and fancies, but will not enter into the inward parts ; as if we spake to men that had no hearts or feeling ; this is a making light of Christ and Salvation, *Acts* 28. 26, 27. hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand : seeing ye shall see and shall not perceive. For the heart of this people is waxen gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, their eyes are closed, &c.

3. When men have no high estimation of Christ and salvation, but whatsoever they may say with your tongues, or dreamingly and speculatively Believe, yet in their serious and practical thoughts, they have a higher estimation of the matters of this world, then they have of Christ and the salvation that he hath purchased ; this is a making

making light of him. When men account the Doctrine of Christ to be but a matter of words and names, as *Gallio*, *Acts* 18. 4. or as *Festus*, *Acts* 25. 19. a superstitious matter about one Jesus who was dead, and *Paul* faith is alive. Or ask the Preachers of the Gospel as the *Athenians*, *Acts* 17. 18. *What will this babler say?* This is contempt of Christ.

4. When men are informed of the truths of the Gospel, and on what terms Christ and his benefits may be had, and how it is the will of God that they should *Believe* and *Accept* the offer; and that he *commandeth* them to do it upon pain of damnation; and yet men *will* not consent, unless they could have Christ on terms of their own: They will not part with their worldly contents, nor lay down their pleasures and profits, and honour at his feet, as being content to take so much of them only as he will give them back, and as is consistent with his will and interest, but think it is a hard saying, that they must forsake all in Resolution for Christ; this is a making light of him and their salvation. When men might have part in him and all his Benefits if they *would*, and they *will* not, unless they may keep the world too; and are resolved to please their
flesh,

flesh, whatever comes of it ; this is a high contempt of Christ and everlasting life. *Mat.* 13. 21, 22. *Luke* 18. 23. you may find examples offuch as I here describe.

5. When men will promise fair, and profess their willingness to have Christ on his terms, and to forsake all for him ; but yet *do stick* to the world and their sinful courses ; and when it comes to *practice*, will not be removed by all that Christ hath done and said : this is making light of Christ and salvation, *Jer.* 42. 5. mpared with 43. 2.

III. **T**HE causes of this sin are the next thing to be enquired after. It may seem a wonder that ever men that have the use of their reason, should be so sottish as to make light of matters of such consequence. But the cause is ;

1. Some men understand not the very sense of the words of the Gospel, when they hear it, and how can they be taken with that which they understand not ? Though we speak to them in plain English, and study to speak it as plain as we can ; yet people have so estranged themselves from God, and the matters of their own happiness, that they know not what we say, as if we spoke
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another language, and as if they were under that Judgement, *Isa. 28. 11.* with stammering lips, and with another tongue will he speak to this people.

2. Some that do understand the *words* that we speak, yet because they are carnal, understand not the *matter* : for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* They are earthly, and these things are heavenly, *John 3. 12.* The things of the Spirit are not well known by bare hearsay, but by a spiritual taste, which none have but those that are taught by the Holy Ghost, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* that we may know the things that are given us of God.

3. A carnal mind apprehendeth not a *subtlety* in these spiritual and heavenly things to his mind, and therefore he sets light by them, and hath no mind of them. When you tell him of everlasting glory, he heareth you as if you were perswading him to go play with the Sun : they are matters of another world, and out of his element ; and therefore he hath no more delight in them then a Fish would have to be in the fairest Meadow, or then a swine hath in a Jewel, or a Dog in a piece of Gold : They
may

may be good to others, but he cannot apprehend them as suitable to him, because he hath a nature that is otherwise inclined: he favour-eth not the things of the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 5.*

4. The main cause of the slighting of Christ and salvation, is, a secret root of *unbelief* in mens hearts. Whatsoever they may pretend, they do not soundly and thoroughly *believe* the Word of God: they are taught in general to say, *the Gospel is true*; but they never saw the *Evidence* of its truth so far as thoroughly to perswade them of it; nor have they got their souls settled on the Infallibility of Gods Testimony, nor considered of the truth of the particular Doctrines revealed in the Scripture, so far as soundly to believe them. Oh did you all but *soundly Believe* the words of this Gospel, of the evil of sin, of the need of Christ, and what he hath done for you, and what you must *be* and *do* if ever you will be saved by him; and what will become of you for ever, if you do it not; I dare say, it would cure the contempt of Christ and you would not make so light of the matters of your salvation. But men do not *believe* while they say they do, and would face us down that they do, and verily think that they do themselves. There is a root of bitterness,

terness, and an evil heart of unbelief, that makes them depart from the living God, *Heb. 2. 12. and 4. 1, 2, 6.* Tell any man in this Congregation, that he shall have a gift of 10000 li. if he will but go to *London* for it ; if he believe you, he will go ; but if he believe not, he will not ; and if he will not go, you may be sure he believeth not, supposing that he is able. I know a slight belief may stand with a wicked life : Such as men have of the truth of a prognostication, *it may be true and it may be false ;* but a *true and sound* belief is not consistent with so great neglect of the things that are Believed.

5. Christ and salvation are made light of by the world, because of their desperate hardness of heart. The heart is hard naturally, and by custom in sinning made more hard, especially by long abuse of mercy, and neglect of the means of grace, and resisting the Spirit of God. Hence it is that men are turned into such stones : and till God cure them of the stone of the heart, no wonder if they *feel* not what they know, or regard not what we say, but make light of all ; tis hard preaching a stone into tears, or making a rock to tremble. You may stand over a dead body long enough,
and

and say to it, *Oh thou carcass, when thou hast lain rotting and mouldred to dust till the Resurrection, God will then call thee to account for thy sin, and cast thee into everlasting fire,* before you can make it feel what you say, or fear the misery that is never so truly threatned: when mens hearts are like the high-way that is trodden to hardness by long custome in sinning, or like the clay that is hardned to a stone by the heat of those mercies that should have melted them into Repentance: when they have consciences seared with an hot Iron, as the Apostle speaks, *2 Tim. 4. 2.* No wonder then if they be past feeling, and working all uncleanness with greediness, do make light of Christ and everlasting glory. Oh that this were not the case of too many of our hearers! Had we but *living souls* to speak to, they would hear, and feel, and not make light of what we say. I know they are naturally alive, but they are spiritually dead, as Scripture witnesseth, *Ephes. 2. 3.* Oh if there were but one spark of the life of grace in them, the Doctrine of Salvation by Jesus Christ, would appear to them to be the weightiest business in the world. Oh how confident should I be, me thinks, to prevail with men, and to take them off this,

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world,

world, and bring them to mind the matter of another world, if I spake but to men that had life and sense, and reason ! But when we speak to blocks and dead men, how should we be regarded ? Oh how sad, a case are these souls in, that are fallen under this fearful judgement of spiritual madness and deadness ! To have a blind mind, and an hard heart, to be sottish and senseless, *Mark* 4. 12. *John* 12. 40. lest they should be converted, and their sin should be forgiven them.

6. Christ and salvation are made light of by the world, because they are wholly enslaved to their sense, and taken up with lower things : the matters of another world are out of sight, and so far from their senses, that they cannot regard them ; but present things are nearer them, in their eyes, and in their hands : there must be a living faith to prevail over sense, before men can be so taken with things that are not seen, though they have the Word of God for their security, as to neglect and let go things that are still before their eyes. Sense works with great advantage, and therefore doth much in resisting faith where it is. No wonder then if it carry all before it, where there is no true and lively faith to resist, and to lead

lead the soul to higher things : this cause of making light of Christ and salvation, is expressed here in my Text : one went to his farm, and another to his merchandize : men have houses and lands to look after : they have wife and children to mind, they have their body and outward estate to regard, therefore they forget that they have a God, a Redeemer, a soul to minde ; these matters of the world are still with them. They *see* these, but they *see not* God, nor Christ, nor their souls, nor everlasting glory. These things are *near* at hand, and therefore work *naturally*, and so work *forcibly* ; but the other are thought on as a great way off, and therefore too distant to work on their affections, or be at the present so much regarded by them. Their body hath life and sense, and therefore if they want meat, or drink, or cloaths, will feel their want, and tell them of it, and give them no rest till their wants be supplied ; and therefore they cannot make light of their bodily necessities ; but their souls in spiritual respects are dead, and therefore feel not their wants, but will let them alone in their greatest necessities ; and be as quiet when they are starved and languishing to destruction, as if all were well and nothing ayled them.

And hereupon poor people are wholly taken up in providing for the body, as if they had nothing else to minde. They have their trades and callings to follow, and so much to do from morning to night, that they can find no time for matters of salvation; Christ would teach them, but they have no leisure to hear him: the Bible is before them, but they cannot have while to read it: A Minister is in the Town with them, but they cannot have while to go to enquire of him what they should do to be saved: And when they do hear, their hearts are so full of the world, and carried away with these lower matters, that they cannot minde the things which they hear. They are so full of the thoughts, and desires, and cares of this world, that there is no room to pour into them the water of life: The cares of the world do choak the Word, and make it become unfruitful, *Matth. 13. 22.* Men cannot serve two masters, God and Mammon, but they will lean to the one, and despise the other, *Matth. 6. 24.* He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him. *1 John 2, 15, 16.* Men cannot choose but set light by Christ and salvation, while they set so much by any thing on earth; it is that which is highly esteemed among men, is
abominable

abominable in the sight of God, *Luk. 16. 15.*
 Oh this is the ruine of many thousand souls !
 It would grieve the heart of any honest
 Christian, to see how eagerly this vain world
 is followed everywhere, and how little men
 set by Christ, and the world to come ; to
 compare the care that men have for the
 world, with the care of their souls ; and the
 time that they lay out on the world, with
 that time they lay out for their salvation :
 To see how the world fills their mouths ,
 their hands, their houses, their hearts ; and
 Christ hath little more then a bare title :
 to come into their company, and hear no
 discourse but of the world, to come into
 their houses, and hear and see nothing but
 for the world, as if this world would last
 for ever, or would purchase them another.
 When I ask sometime the Ministers of the
 Gospel how their labours succeed, they tell
 me, *People continue still the same, and give up
 themselves wholly to the world, so that they
 minde not what Ministers say to them, nor
 will give any full entertainment to the Word,
 and all because of the deluding world : And*
 oh that too many Ministers themselves did
 not make light of that Christ whom they
 preach, being drawn away with the love of
 this world ! In a word, men of a worldly
 O 4 disposition

disposition do judge of things according to worldly advantages; therefore Christ is flighted, *Isa. 53. 3.* *He is despised and rejected of men, they hide their faces from him, and esteem him not, as seeing no beauty or comeliness in him, that they should desire him.*

7. Christ and salvation are made light of, because men do not soberly *consider* of the truth and weight of these necessary things. They suffer not their minds so long to *dwell* upon them, till they procure a due esteem, and deeply affect their heart; did they believe them, and not *consider* of them, how should they work? Oh when men have reason given them to Think and Consider of the things that most concern them, and yet they will not use it, this causeth their contempt.

8. Christ and salvation are made light of, because men were never *sensible* of their *sin and misery*, and *extream necessity* of Christ and his salvation: their eyes were never opened to see *themselves* as they are; nor their hearts soundly humbled in the sense of their condition: if this were done, they would soon be brought to value a Saviour: a truly broken heart can no more make light of Christ and salvation, then a hungry man of his food, or a sick man of the
the

the means that would give him ease : but till then, our words cannot have access to their hearts : while sin and misery is made light of, Christ and salvation will be made light of : but when these are perceived an intolerable burden, then nothing will serve the turn but Christ. Till men be truly humbled, they can venture Christ and salvation for a lust, for a little worldly gain, even for less then nothing : but when God hath illuminated them, and broken their hearts, then they would give a world for a Christ ; then they *must have Christ, or they dye ; all things then are loss and dung to them in regard of the excellent knowledge of Christ, Phil. 3. 8.* When they are once pricked in their hearts for sin and misery, then they cry out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do ? Act. 2. 37.* When they are awakned by Gods Judgements, as the poor Jaylor, *Act. 16. 29.* then they cry out, *Sirs, what shall I do to be saved ?* This is the reason why God will bring men so low by humiliation, before he bring them to salvation.

9. Men take occasion to make light of Christ, by the *commonness* of the Gospel ; because they do hear of it every day, ~~the~~ *frequency* is an occasion to dull their affections ; I say, an Occasion : for it is no just cause.

cause. Were it a *rarity*, it might take more with them; but *now*, if they hear a Minister preach nothing but these saving Truths, they say, *we have these every day*; They make not light of their bread or drink, their health or life, because they possess them *every day*; they make not light of the Sun, because it shineth *every day*; at least they should not, for the mercy is the greater; but Christ and salvation are made light of, because they hear of them often; *This is*, say they, *a good plain dry Sermon*: *Pearls* are trod in the dirt where they are *common*; They loath this dry Manna, *Prov. 27. 7.* The full soul loaths the hony-comb; but to the hungry every bitter thing is sweet.

10. Christ and salvation are made light of, because of this disjunctive *presumption*, either that he is sure enough *theirs already*, and God that is so merciful, and Christ that hath suffered so much for them, is surely resolved to save them, or else it may easily be obtained at any time, if it be not yet so. A conceited *facility* to have a part in Christ and salvation at any time, doth occasion men to make light of them. It is true, that grace is *free*, and the offer is universal, according to the extent of the preaching of the

the Gospel ; and it is true that men may have Christ *when they will* ; that is, when they are willing to have him on his terms ; but he that hath promised thee Christ, if thou be willing, hath not promised to make thee willing : and if thou art not willing *now*, how canst thou think thou shalt be willing hereafter ? If thou canst make thine own heart willing, why is it not done now ? Can you do it better when sin hath more hardened it, and God may have given thee over to thy self ? Oh sinners ! you might do much, though you are not able of your selves to come in, if you would now subject your selves to the working of the Spirit, and set in while the gales of grace continue ; But did you know what a hard and impossible thing it is to be so much as willing to have Christ and grace, when the heart is given over to it self, and the Spirit hath withdrawn its former Invitations, you would not be so confident of your own strength to Believe and Repent : nor would you make light of Christ upon such foolish confidence. If indeed it be so easie a matter as you imagine for a sinner to Believe and Repent at any time ; how comes it to pass that it is done by so few, but most of the world do perish in their impenitency, when they have

have all the helps and means that we can afford them? It is true, the thing is very reasonable and easie in it self to a pure nature; but while man is blind and dead, these things are in a sort impossible to him, which are never so easie to others. It is the easiest and sweetest life in the world to a gracious soul to live in the love of God, and the delightful thoughts of the life to come, where all their hope and happiness lieth: But to a worldly carnal heart it is as easie to remove a mountain, as to bring them to this. However, these men are their own condemners; for if they think it so easie a matter to Repent and Believe, and so to have Christ and right to salvation, then have they no excuse for neglecting this which they thought so easie. O wretched impenitent soul! what mean you to say, when God shall ask you, *Why did you not Repent and Love your Redeemer above the world, when you thought it so easie that you could do it at any time?*

IV. Use 1. **W**E come now to the Application: and hence you may be informed of the blindness and folly of all carnall men: how *contemptible* are their judgments that think Christ and salvation *contemptible*: and how little reason there is why any should be moved by them, or discouraged by any of their scorns or contradictions.

How shall we sooner know a man to be a fool, then if he knows no difference between Dung and Gold! Is there such a thing as *madness* in the world, if that man be not mad, that sets light by Christ and his own salvation, while he dayly toyls for the dung of the earth? And yet what pittie is it to see that a company of poor ignorant souls will be ashamed of godliness, if such men as these do but deride them! Or will think hardly of a holy life, if such as these do speak against it! Hearers, if you see any *set light* by Christ and salvation, do you *set light* by that mans *wit*, and by his *words*, and hear the reproaches of a holy life, as you would hear the words of a mad man: not with regard, but with a compassion of his misery.

Use 2.

Use 2. **W**Hat wonder if we and our preaching be despised, and the best Ministers complain of ill success, when the Ministry of the Apostles themselves did succeed no better? what wonder if for all that we can say or do, our hearers still set light by Christ and their own salvation, when the Apostles hearers did the same? They that did second their Doctrine by Miracles: if any men could have shaken and torn in pieces the hearts of sinners, they could have done it: If any could have laid them at their feet, and made them all cry out as some, *What shall we do*, it would have been they. You may see then that it is not meerly for want of good preachers that men make light of Christ and salvation: the first news of such a thing as the pardon of sin, and the hopes of glory, and the danger of everlasting misery, would turn the hearts of men within them, if they were as tractable in spiritual matters as in temporal: But alas, it is far otherwise. It must not seem any strange thing, nor must it too much discourage the preachers of the Gospel, if when they have said all that they can devise to say to win the hearts of men

to Christ, the most do still slight him, and while they bow the knee to him, and honour him with their lips, do yet set so light by him in their hearts, as to prefer every fleshly pleasure or commodity before him. It will be thus with many : let us be glad that it is not thus with All.

Use 3. **B**UT for closer application. Seeing this is the great condemning sin, before we enquire after it into the hearts of our hearers, it beseems us to begin at home, and see that we who are Preachers of the Gospel be not guilty of it our selves. The Lord forbid that they that have undertaken the sacred office of revealing the excellencies of Christ to the world, should make light of him themselves, and slight that salvation which they do daily preach. The Lord knows we are all of us so low in our estimation of Christ, and do this great work so negligently, that we have cause to be ashamed of our best Sermons; but should this sin prevail in us, we were the most miserable of all men. Brethren, I love not censoriousness; yet dare not befriend so vile a sin in my self or others under pretence of avoiding it : especially
when

when there is so great necessity that it should be healed first in them that make it their work to heal it in others. O that there were no cause to complain that Christ and salvation are made light of by the Preachers of it. But, 1. Do not the negligent studies of some speak it out? 2. Doth not their dead and drowsie preaching declare it? do not they make light of the Doctrine they preach, that do it as if they were half asleep, and feel not what they speak themselves?

3. Doth not the carelesness of some mens private endeavours discover it? what do they for souls? how sleightly do they reprove sin? how little do they when they are out of the Pulpit for the saving of mens souls?

4. Doth not the continued neglect of those things wherein the interest of Christ consisteth discover it? 1. The Churches Purity and Reformation, 2. Its Unity.

5. Doth not the covetous and worldly lives of too many discover it, losing advantages for mens souls, for a little gain to themselves? And most of this is because men are Preachers before they are Christians, and tell men of that which they never felt themselves. Of all men on earth, there are few that are in so sad a condition as
such

such Ministers : and if indeed they do believe that Scripture which they preach, methinks it should be terrible to them in their studying and preaching it.

Use. 4. **B**Eloved hearers ; the office that God hath called us to, is, by declaring the glory of his grace, to help under Christ to the saving of mens souls. I hope you think not that I come hither to day on any other errand. The Lord knows I had not set a foot out of doors but in hope to succeed in this work for your souls. I have considered and often considered, what is the matter that so many thousands should perish when God hath done so much for their salvation ; and I find this that is mentioned in my Text is the cause. It is one of the wonders of the world, that when God hath so loved the world as to send his Son, and Christ hath made a satisfaction by his death sufficient for them all, and offereth the benefits of it so freely to them, even without money or price, that yet the most of the world should perish ; yea the most of those that are thus called by his Word ! Why here is the reason, when Christ hath done all this, men

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make

make light of it. God hath shewed that *he* is not unwilling; and Christ hath shewed that *he* is not unwilling that men should be restored to Gods favour and be saved; but men are actually unwilling *themselves*. God takes not *pleasure* in the death of sinners, but rather that they return and live, *Ezek.* 33. 11. But men take such *pleasure* in sin, that they will dye before they will return. The Lord Jesus was content to be their Phyitian, and hath provided them a sufficient plaister of his own blood: but if men make light of it, and will not apply it, what wonder if they perish after all? This Scripture giveth us the reason of their perdition. This sad experience tells us the most of the world is guilty of. It is a most lamentable thing to see how most men do spend their care, their time, their pains for known vanities, while God and Glory are cast aside: That he who is *all* should seem to them as *nothing*; and that which is *nothing* should seem to them as good as *all*; that God should set mankind in such a race where heaven or hell is their certain end, and that they should set down, and loyter, or run after the childish toyes of the world, and so much forget the prize that they should run for. Were it but possible for one
of

of us to see the *whole* of this business, as the all-seeing God doth; to see at one view both heaven and hell which men are so near, and see what most men in the world are minding, and what they are doing every day, it would be the saddest sight that could be imagined. Oh how should we marvel at their madness, and lament their self-delusion! Oh poor distracted world! what is it that you run after? and what is it that you neglect? If God had never told them what they were sent into the world to do, or whether they were going, or what was before them in another world, then they had been excusable; but he hath told them over and over, till they were weary of it. Had he left it doubtful, there had been some excuse; but it is his sealed Word, and they profess to believe it, and would take it ill of us if we should question whether they do believe it or not.

Beloved, I come not to accuse any of you particularly of this crime: but seeing it is the commonest cause of mens Destruction, I suppose you will judge it the fittest matter for our enquiry, and deserving our greatest care for the cure. To which end I shall 1. Endeavour the *Conviction* of the guilty. 2. Shall give them such considerations

tions as may tend to humble and reform them. 3. I shall conclude with such direction as may help them that are willing to escape the destroying power of this sin. And for the first, consider,

1. It is the case of most sinners to think themselves freest from those sins that they are most enslaved to; and one reason why we cannot reform them, is, because we cannot convince them of their guilt. It is the nature of sin so far to blind and befool the sinner, that he knoweth not what he doth, but thinketh he is free from it when it reigneth in him, or when he is committing it : It bringeth men to be so much unacquainted with themselves, that they know not what they think, or what they mean and intend, nor what they love or hate, much less what they are habituated and disposed to. They are alive to sin, and dead to all the Reason, Consideration and Resolution that should recover them, as if it were only by their sinning that we must know they are alive. May I hope that you^r that hear me to day, are but willing to know the Truth of your case, and then I shall be encouraged to proceed to an enquiry. God will judge impartially; why should not we do so? Let me therefore by these following Questions try whether

ther none of you are flighters of Christ and your own salvation. And follow me, I beseech you, by putting them close to your own hearts, and faithfully answering them.

1. Things that men highly value will be *remembered*, they will be matter of their freest and sweetest thoughts; this is a known case.

Do not those then make light of Christ and salvation, that think of them so seldom and coldly in comparison of other things? Follow thy own heart man, and observe what it daily runneth out after; and then Judge whether it make not light of Christ.

We cannot perswade men to one hours sober consideration what they should do for an interest in Christ, or in thankfulness for his love, and yet they will not believe that they make light of him.

2. Things that we highly value will be matter of our Discourse: The Judgement and heart will command the tongue. Freely and delightfully will our speech run after them; this also is a known case.

Do not those then make light of Christ and salvation, that shun the mention of his name, unless it be in a vain or sinful use? Those that love not the company where
P 3 Christ

Christ and salvation is much talked of ; but think it troublesome precise discourse : That had rather hear some merry jests, or idle tales, or talk of their riches or business in the world. When you may follow them from morning to night, and scarce have a savory word of Christ ; but perhaps some sleight and weary mention of him sometimes ; judge whether these make not light of Christ and salvation. How seriously do they talk of the world? *Psal. 144. 8, 11.* and speak vanity ! but how heartlessly do they make mention of Christ and salvation !

3. The things that we highly value, we would secure the possession of, and therefore would take any convenient course to have all doubts and fears about them well resolved. Do not those men then make light of Christ and salvation, that have lived 20. or 30 years in uncertainty whether they have any part in these or not, and yet never seek out for the right resolution of their doubts ? Are all that hear me this day certain they shall be saved ? Oh that they were ; Oh had you not made light of salvation, you could not so easily bear such doubtings of it ; you could not rest till you had made it sure, or done your best to make it sure. Have you no body to enquire of

that

that might help you in such a work ? Why you have ministers that are purposely appointed to that office. Have you gone to them and told them the doubtfulness of your case, and asked their help in the judging of your condition ? Alas Ministers may sit in their studies from one year to another, before ten persons among 1000. will come to them on such an errand ! Do not these make light of Christ and salvation ? when the Gospel pierceth the heart indeed, they cry out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved ! Acts 16. 30. and 9. 6.* trembling and astonished *Paul* cries out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?* And so did the convinced Jews to *Peter*, *Acts 2. 37.* But when hear we such Questions ?

4. The things that we value, do deeply affect us, and some motions will be in the heart according to our estimation of them. Oh Sirs, If men made not light of these things, what *working* would there be in the hearts of all our hearers ? What strange affections would it raise in them to hear of the matters of the world to come ! How would their hearts melt before the power of the Gospel ? what sorrow would be wrought in the discovery of their sin ? what astonishment at the consideration of their misery ?

what unspeakable joy at the glad tidings of Salvation by the blood of Christ ? what resolution would be raised in them upon the discovery of their duty ? Oh what hearers should we have if it were not for this sin ! whereas now, we are liker to weary them, or preach them asleep with matters of this unspeakable moment. We talk to them of Christ and salvation, till we make their heads ache : Little would one think by their careless carriage, that they heard and regarded what we said, or thought we spoke at all to them.

5. Our estimation of things will be seen in the diligence of our endeavours. That which we highlyest value, we shall think no pains too great to obtain. Do not those men then make light of Christ and salvation, that think all too much that they do for them, that murmur at his service, and think it too grievous for them to endure ? that ask of his service as *Judas* of the ointment ; *What need this wast ? cannot men be saved without so much ado ? this is more ado then needs.* For the world they will labour all the day, and all their lives ; but for Christ and salvation they are afraid of doing too much. Let us preach to them as long as we will, we cannot bring them to relish or resolve

solve upon a life of holiness. Follow them to their houses, and you shall not hear them read a Chapter, nor call upon God with their families once a day; Nor will they allow him that one day in seven which he hath separated to his service. But pleasure, or worldly business, or idleness must have a part. And many of them are so far hardened, as to reproach them that will not be as mad as themselves. And is not Christ worth the seeking? Is not everlasting salvation worth more then all this? Doth not that soul make light of all these, that thinks his ease more worth they they? Let but common sense judge.

6. That which we most highly value, we think we cannot *buy too dear*: Christ and salvation are freely given, and yet the most of men go without them, because they cannot enjoy the world and them together. They are called but to part with that which would hinder them from Christ, and they will not do it. They are called but to give God his own, and to resign all to his will, and let go the profits and pleasures of this world, when they must let go either Christ or them, and they will not. They think this too dear a bargain, and say they cannot spare these things: They must hold their
cre-

credit with men ; They must look to their estates : how shall they live else ? They must have their pleasure, whatsoever becomes of Christ and salvation : As if they could live without Christ better then without these : as if they were afraid of being losers by Christ, or could make a saving match by losing their souls to gain the world. Christ hath told us over and over, that if we will not forsake all for him, we cannot be his Disciples, *Mat. 10.* Far are these men from forsaking all, and yet will needs think that they are his Disciples indeed.

7. That which men highly esteem, they would *help their friends to* as well as themselves. Do not those men make light of Christ and salvation, that can take so much care to leave their children portions in the world, and do so little to help them to heaven ? That provide outward necessities so carefully for their families, but do so little to the saving of their souls ? Their neglected children and friends will witness, that either Christ or their childrens souls, or both, were made light of.

8. That which men highly esteem, they will so diligently seek after, that you may see it in the *success*, if it be a matter within
their

their reach. You may see how many make light of Christ, by the little knowledge they have of him, and the little communion with him, and communication from him ; and the little, yea, none of his special graces in them. Alas ! how many Ministers can speak it to the sorrow of their hearts, that many of their people know almost nothing of Christ, though they hear of him dayly ! nor know they what they must do to be saved ; If we ask them an account of these things, they answer as if they understood not what we say to them, and tell us they are no Scholars, and therefore think they are excusable for their ignorance. Oh if these men had not made light of Christ, and their salvation, but had bestowed but half so much pains to know and enjoy him, as they have done to understand the matters of their Trades and Callings in the world, they would not have been so ignorant as they are : They make light of these things, and therefore will not be at the pains to study or learn them. When men that can learn the hardest trade in a few years, have not learned a Catechism, nor how to understand their Creed, under twentie or thirtie years preaching, nor cannot abide to be Questioned about such things ; doth not this shew

shew that they have slighted them in their hearts? How will these despisers of Christ and Salvation be able one day to look him in the face, and to give an account of these neglects?

THUS much I have spoken in order to your Conviction. Do not some of your consciences by this time smite you, and say, *I am the man that have made light of my salvation?* If they do not, it is because you make light of it still, for all that is said to you. But because, if it be the will of the Lord, I would fain have this damning distemper cured, and am loth to leave you in such a desperate condition, if I knew how to remedy it; I will give you some considerations, which may move you, if you be men of reason and understanding, to look better about you; and I beseech you weigh them, and make use of them as we go, and lay open your hearts to the work of grace, and sadly bethink you what a case you are in, if you prove such as make light of Christ.

Consider, 1. Thou makest light of him that made not light of thee who didst deserve it. Thou wast worthy of nothing but contempt. As a man, what art thou but a
worm

worm to God ? As a sinner, thou art far viler then a toad : yet Christ was so far from making light of thee and thy happiness, that he came down into the flesh, and lived a life of suffering, and offered himself a sacrifice to the Justice which thou hadst provoked, that thy miserable soul might have a remedy. It is no less then miracles of love and mercy that he hath shewed to us : and yet shall we slight them after all ?

Angels admire them, whom they less concern, 1 *Pet* 1. 12. and shall redeemed sinners make light of them ? What barbarous, yea devilish, yea worse then devilish ingratitude is this ? the Devils never had a Saviour offered them, but thou hast, and dost thou yet make light of him ?

2. Consider the work of mans salvation by Jesus Christ, is the master-piece of all the works of God, wherein he would have his love and mercy to be magnified. As the Creation declareth his goodness and power, so doth Redemption his goodness and mercy ; he hath contrived the very frame of his worship so, that it shall much consist in the magnifying of this work ; and after all this will you make light of it ? His name is wonderful, *Isa.* 9. 6. He did the work that none could do. *John* 15. 24. Greater love could

ould none shew then his, *John 15. 13*
 How great was the evil and misery that he
 delivered us from? the good procured for
 us? all are wonders, from his birth to his
 ascension; from our new birth to our glo-
 rification, all are wonders of matchless
 mercy. And yet do you make light of
 them!

3 You make light of matters of *greatest excellency and moment in the world*: you know not what it is that you sleight: had you well known, you could not have done it. As Christ said to the woman of *Samaritan*, *John 4. 10.* hadst thou known who it is that speaketh to thee, thou wouldst have asked of him the waters of life; Had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, *1 Cor. 2. 8.* So, had you known what Christ is, you would not have made light of him; Had you been one day in heaven, and but seen what they possess, and seen also what miserable souls must endure that are shut out, you would never sure have made so light of Christ again.

Oh Sirs, it is no trifles or jesting matters that the Gospel speaks of. I must needs profess to you, that when I have the most serious thoughts of these things my self, I am ready to marvel that such amazing matters do

do not overwhelm the souls of men: that the greatness of the subject doth not so overmatch our understandings and affections, as even to drive men beside themselves, but that God hath always somewhat allayed it by the distance: much more that men should be so blockish as to make light of them. Oh Lord, that men did but know what everlasting glory, and everlasting torments are; Would they then hear us as they do? Would they read and think of these things as they do? I profess I have been ready to wonder when I have heard such weighty things delivered, how people can forbear crying out in the congregation; much more, how they can rest till they have gone to their Ministers and learned what they should do to be saved, that this great business might be put out of doubt. Oh that heaven and hell should work no more on men! Oh that everlastingness should work no more! Oh how can you forbear when you are alone to think with you selves what it is to be everlastingly in Joy or in Torment! I wonder that such thoughts do not break your sleep; and that they come not in your mind when you are about your labour! I wonder how you can almost do any thing else: How can you have any
 quietness

quietness in your minds : how you can eat, or drink, or rest, till you have got some ground of everlasting consolations ! Is that a *man* or a *corps* that is not affected with matters of this moment ? That can be readier to sleep, then to tremble, when he heareth how he must stand at the Barr of God ? Is that a *man*, or a *clod of clay*, that can rise and lie down without being deeply affected with his everlasting estate ? that can follow his worldly business, and make nothing of the great business of salvation or damnation ; and that when they know it is hard at hand ? Truly Sirs, when I think of the weight of the matter, I wonder at the very best of Gods Saints upon earth, that they are no better, and do no more in so weighty a case. I wonder at those whom the world accounteth more holy then needs, and scorns for making too much ado ; that they can put off Christ and their souls with so little : that they pour not out their souls in every supplication : that they are not more taken up with God ; that their thoughts be not more serious in preparation for their account. I wonder that they be not an hundred times more strict in their lives ; and more laborious and unwearyed in striving for the crown, then they are. And for my self,

self, as I am ashamed of my dull and careless heart, and of my slow and unprofitable course of life ; so the Lord knows, I am ashamed of every Sermon that I preach : when I think *what* I have been speaking of, and *who* sent me ; and what mens salvation or damnation is so much concerned in it. I am ready to tremble, lest God should judge me as a flighter of his truth, and the souls of men, and lest in the best Sermon I should be guilty of their blood. Me thinks we should not speak a word to men in matters of such consequence, without tears, or the greatest earnestness that possibly we can : were not we too much guilty of the sin which we reprove, it would be so. Whether we are alone, or in company, me thinks our end, and such an end, should still be in our mind, and as before our eyes ; and we should sooner forget any thing, and set light by any thing, or by all things, then by this,

Consider 4. Who is it that sends this weighty Message to you ? Is it not God himself ? Shall the God of heaven speak, and men make light of it ? You would not slight the voice of an Angel or a Prince.

5. *Whose* salvation is it that you make light of ? Is it not your own ? Are you no more near or dear to your selves, then to
 Q make

make light of your *own* happiness or misery
 Why Sirs, do you not care whether you be
 saved or damned? Is self-love lost? Are
 you turned your own enemies? As he that
 flighteth his meat doth flight his life; so
 if you flight Christ, whatsoever you may
 think, you will find it was your own salva-
 tion that you flighted. Hear what he saith,
*Proverbs 1. 36. All they that hate me, love
 death.*

6. Your sin is greater, in that you profess
 to Believe the Gospel which you make so
 light of. For a professed Infidel to do it,
 that believes not that ever Christ died, or
 rose again; or doth not believe that there is
 an heaven or hell, this were no such marvel;
 but for you that make it your Creed, and
 your very Religion, and call your selves
 Christians, and have been baptized into this
 faith, and seemed to stand to it, this is the
 wonder, and hath no excuse. What! believe
 that you shall live in endless Joy or Tor-
 ment, and yet make no more of it, to escape
 Torment, and obtain that Joy. What! be-
 lieve that God will shortly judge you, and
 yet make no more preparation for it?
 Either say plainly, *I am no Christian, I do
 not believe these wonderful things! I will be-
 lieve nothing but what I see; or else let your
 hearts*

hearts be affected with your Belief, and live as you say you do believe. What do you think when you repeat the Creed, and mention Christs Judgement and everlasting life?

7. What are these things you set so much by, as to prefer them before Christ and the saving of your souls? Have you found a better friend, a greater and surer happiness then this? Good Lord! What dung is it that men make so much of, while they set so light by everlasting glory! What toys are they that they are daily taken up with, while matters of life and death are neglected! Why Sirs, If you had every one a Kingdom in your hopes, what were it in comparison of the everlasting Kingdom? I cannot but look upon all the glory and dignity of this world; Lands and Lordships, Crowns and Kingdoms, even as on some brainfick beggarly fellow, that borroweth fine cloaths, and playes the part of a King or a Lord for an hour on a stage, and then comes down, and the sport is ended, and they are beggars again. Were it not for Gods interest in the Authority of Magistrates, or for the service they might do him, I should judge no better of them. For as to their own glory, it is but a smoak: what

matter is it whether you live poor or rich,
 unless it were a greater matter to *die* rich
 then it is ? You know well enough that
 death levels all : what matter is it at
 Judgement, whether you be to answer for
 the life of a rich man, or a poor man ? Is
Dives then any better then *Lazarus* ? Oh
 that men knew what a poor deceiving sha-
 dow they grasp at, while they let go the ever-
 lasting substance ! The strongest and richest,
 and most voluptuous sinners, do but lay in
 fuel for their sorrows, while they think they
 are gathering together a treasure. Alas !
 they are asleep, and dream that they are
 happy ; but when they awake, what a
 change will they finde ? Their crown is made
 of thorns : their pleasure hath such a sting
 as will stick in the heart through all eternity,
 except unfeigned Repentance do prevent it.
 Oh how sadly will these wretches be con-
 vinced ere long what a foolish bargain they
 made in selling Christ and their salvation for
 these trifles ! Let your farms and merchan-
 dize then save you if they can ; and do that
 for you that Christ would have done. Cry
 then to thy *Baal* to save thee ! Oh what
 thoughts have drunkards and adulterers,
 &c. of Christ, that will not part with the
 basest lust for him ! For a piece of bread,
 faith

saith *Solomon*, such men do transgress, *Prov.* 28.21.

8. To set so light by Christ and salvation is a certain mark that thou hast no part in them, and if thou so continue, that Christ will set *as light* by thee : those that honour him he will honour, and those that despise him shall be lightly esteemed, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. Thou wilt feel one day that thou canst not live without him. Thou wilt confess then thy need of him ; and then thou maist go look for a Saviour where thou wilt ; for he will be no Saviour for thee hereafter, that wouldst not value him, and submit to him here : Then who will prove the loser by thy contempt ? Oh what a thing will it be for a poor miserable soul to cry to Christ for help in the day of extremity, and to hear so sad an answer as this ! Thou didst set light by me and my Law in the day of thy prosperity, and I will now set *as light* by thee in thy adversity. Read *Prov.* 1. 24. to the end. Thou that as *Esau* didst sell thy birth-right for a mess of Pottage, shalt then find no place for repentance, though thou seek it with tears, *Heb.* 12. 17. Do you think that Christ shed his blood to save them that continue to make light of it ? and to save them that value a cup of drink or a lust be-

fore his salvation ? I tell you Sirs, though *you* set so light by Christ and salvation, *God* doth not so : He will not give them on such terms as these : He valueth the blood of his Son, and the everlasting glory ; and he will make *you* value them, if ever you have them. Nay, this will be thy condemnation, and leaveth no remedy. All the world cannot save him that sets light by Christ, *Heb. 2.3. Luke 14.24.* None of them shall taste of his Supper, *Matth. 10.37.* Nor can you blame him to deny you what you made light of your selves. Can you find fault if you miss of the Salvation which you slighted ?

9. The time is near when Christ and salvation will not be made light of as now they are. When God hath shaken those careless souls out of their bodies, and you must answer for all your sins in your own name ; O then what would you give for a Saviour ! when a thousand Bills shall be brought in against you, and none to relieve you, then you will consider, *Oh, Christ would now have stood between me and the wrath of God : had I not despised him, he would have answered all.* When you see the world hath left you, and your companions in sin have deceived themselves and you, and all your merry dayes are gone ;

gone ; then what would you give for that Christ and salvation that now you account not worth your labour ? Do you think when you see the Judgement set, and you are doomed to everlasting perdition for your wickedness, that you should then make as light of Christ as now ? Why will you not judge now, as you know you shall judge then ? Will he then be worth ten thousand worlds, and is he not now worth your highest estimation, and dearest affection ?

10. God will not only deny thee that salvation thou madest light of, but he will take from thee all that which thou didst value before it : He that most highly esteems Christ, shall have him and the creatures so far as they are good here, and him without the creature hereafter, because the creature is not useful ; and he that sets more by the creature than by Christ, shall have some of the creature without Christ here, and neither Christ nor it hereafter.

So much of these considerations, which may shew the true face of this hainous sin.

What think you now friends of this business ? Do you not see by this time what a case that soul is in that maketh light of Christ and salvation ? What need then is there that you should take heed lest this

should prove your own case? The Lord knows it is too common a case. Whoever is found guilty at the last of this sin, it were better for that man he had never been born. It were better for him he had been a Turk or Indian, that never had heard the name of a Saviour, and that never had salvation offered to him: For such men have no cloak for their sin, *John* 15. 22. Besides all the rest of their sins, they have this killing sin to answer for, which will undo them. And this will aggravate their misery: *That* Christ whom they set light by, must be their Judge, and for *this* sin will he judge them. Oh that such would now consider how they will answer that Question that Christ puts to their predecessors, *Matth.* 23. 33. *How will ye escape the damnation of hell?* or *Heb.* 2. 3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* Can you escape without a Christ? or will a despised Christ save you then? If he be accursed that sets light by Father or Mother, *Deut.* 27. 16. what then is he that sets light by Christ? It was the hainous sin of the Jews, that among them were found such as set light by Father and Mother, *Ezek.* 22. 7. but among us, men slight the Father of Spirits. In the name of God Brethren, I beseech you to consider how you will then bear

bear his Anger which you now make light of? You that cannot make light of a little sickness or want, or of natural Death, no not of a tooth-ach, but groan as if you were undone, how will you then make light of the fury of the Lord, which will burn against the contemners of his grace? Doth it not behove you beforehand to think of these things?

Hitherto I have been convincing you of the evil of the sin, and the danger that followeth: I come now to know your Resolution for the time to come. What say you? Do you mean to set as light by Christ and salvation as hitherto you have done? and to be the same men after all this? I hope not. Oh let not your Ministers that would fain save you, be brought in as Witnesses against you, to condemn you. At least, I beseech you put not this upon me. Why Sirs, If the Lord shall say to us at Judgement, Did you never tell these men what Christ did for their souls, and what need they had of him, and how neerly it did concern them to look to their salvation, that they made light of it? we must needs say the Truth: Yea Lord, we told them of it

it as plainly as we could ; we would have gone on our knees to them, if we had thought it would have prevailed; we did intreat them as earnestly as we could, to consider these things : They heard of these things every day ; but alas, we could never get them to their hearts : they gave us the hearing, but they made light of all that we could say to them. Oh sad will it prove on your side, if you force us to such an Answer as this.

But if the Lord do move the hearts of any of you, and you resolve to make light of Christ no more : Or if any of you say, We do not make light of him ; let me tell you here in the conclusion, what you must do, or else you shall be Judged as slights of Christ and salvation.

And first I will tell you what will not serve the turn.

1. You may have a notional knowledge of Christ, and the necessity of his blood, and of the excellency of Salvation, and yet perish as neglecters of him. This is too common among professing Christians. You may say all that other men do of him ; what Gospel passages had *Balaam* ? Jesus I know, and *Paul* I know, the very Devils could say, who believe and tremble, *Jam.* 2.

2. You

2. You may weep at the history of his Passion, when you read how he was used by the Jews; and yet make light of him, and perish for so doing.

3. You may come desirously to his word and ordinances. *Herod* heard gladly; so do many that yet must perish as neglecters of salvation.

4. You may in a fit of fear have strong desires after a Christ, to ease you, and to save you from Gods wrath: as *Saul* had of *David* to play before him; and yet you may perish for making light of Christ.

5. You may obey him in many things, so far as will not ruine you in the world: and escape much of the pollutions of the world by his knowledge, and yet neglect him.

6. You may suffer and lose much for him, so far as leaveth you an earthly felicity; as *Ananias*, the young man. Some parcels of their pleasures and profits many will part with in hope of salvation, that shall perish everlastingly, for valuing it no more.

7. You may be esteemed by others a man zealous for Christ, and loved and admired upon that account, and yet be one that shall perish for making light of him.

8. You may verily think your selves, that
you

you set more by Christ and salvation than any thing, and yet be mistaken, and be judged as contemners of him : Christ justifieth not all that justify themselves.

9. You may be zealous Preachers of Christ and salvation, and reprove others for this neglect, and lament the sin of the world in the like Expression as I have done this day ; and yet if you or I have no better evidence to prove our hearty esteem of Christ and salvation, we are undone for all this.

YOU hear Brethren what will *not* serve the turn ; Will you now hear what persons you *must* be if you would not be condemned as flighters of Christ ? O search whether it be thus with your souls, or no.

1. Your esteem of Christ and salvation, must be greater than your esteem of all the honors, profits, or pleasures of this world, or else you slight him : *No less* will be accounted sincere, nor accepted to your salvation : Think not this hard, when there is no comparison in the matters esteemed. To esteem the greatest glory on earth before Christ and everlasting glory, is a greater folly,

ly, and wrong to Christ, then to esteem a Dog before your Prince, would be folly in you, and a wrong to him. Scripture is plain in this. *Mat. 10. 37. He that loveth father or mother, wife, children, house, land, or his own life more than me, is not worthy of me, and cannot be my Disciple, as Luk. 14. 26.*

2. You must manifest this esteem of Christ and salvation in your daily endeavours and seeking after him, and in parting with any thing that he shall require of you. God is a Spirit, and will not take an hypocritical profession instead of the heart and spiritual service which he commandeth. He will have the heart or nothing; and the chief room in the heart too. These must be had.

If you say that you do not make light of Christ, or will not hereafter, let me try you in these few particulars, whether indeed you mean as you say, and do not dissemble.

1. Will you for the time to come make Christ and salvation the chiefest matter of your care and study? Thrust them not out of your thoughts, as a needless or unprofitable subject; nor allow it only some running slight thoughts, which will not affect you. But will you make it your business once a day to bethink you soberly when you are alone, What Christ hath done for you; and what

what he will do if you do not make light of it ; and what it is to be everlastingly happy or miserable ? and what all things in this world are in comparison of your salvation ? and how they will shortly leave you ? and what mind you will be then of , and how you will esteem them ? will you promise me now and then to make it your business to withdraw your selves from the world , and set your selves to such considerations as these ? If you will not , are not you slighters of Christ , and salvation , that will not be perswaded soberly to think on them ? This is my first Question to put you to the Tryal , whether you will value Christ , or not .

2. Will you for the time to come , set more by the Word of God , which contains the discovery of these excellent things , and is your Charter for salvation , and your guide thereunto ? You cannot set by Christ , but you must set by his Word : Therefore the Despisers of it are threatned with destruction , *Prov. 13*.

13. Will you therefore attend to the public preaching of this Word ? will you read it daily ? will you resolve to obey it whatever it may cost you ? If you will not do this , but make light of the Word of God , you shall be judged as such as make light of Christ and salvation whatever you may fondly promise to your selves.

3. Will

3. Will you for the time to come esteem more of the *Officers* of Christ, whom he hath purposely appointed to *guide* you to salvation? and will you make use of them for that end? Alas, it is not to give the Minister a good word, and speak well of him, and pay him his Tithes duly, that will serve the turn : It is for the necessity of *your* souls that God hath set them in his Church ; that they may be as Physicians under Christ, or his Apothecaries to apply his remedies to your spiritual diseases, not only in publike, but also in private : That you may have some to go to for the resolving of your doubts, and for your instruction where you are ignorant, and for the help of their exhortations and prayers. Will you use hereafter to go to your Ministers privately, and sollicite them for advice? and if you have not such of your own as are fit, get advice from others ; and ask them *What you shall do to be saved? how to prepare for death and Judgement?* and will you obey the Word of God in their mouths? If you will not do this much, nor so much as enquire of those that should teach you, nor use the means which Christ hath established in his Church for your help, your own consciences shall one day witness, that you were such

as made light of Christ and salvation. If any of you doubt whether it be your duty thus to ask counsel of your Teachers, as sick men do of their Physicians, let your own necessities resolve you : let Gods express word resolve you ; see what is said of the Priests of the Lord, even before Christs coming, when much of their work did lie in Ceremonials ! *Mal. 2. 5, 6. My Covenant was with him of life and peace : and I gave them to him (to Levi) for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The Law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips ; he walked with me in Peace and Equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth : for he is the Messenger of the Lord of hosts.*

Nay, you must not only enquire, and submit to their advice, but also to their just reprehensions, and Church censures: And without proud repining submit to the Discipline of Christ in their hands, if it shall be used in the congregations whereof you are members.

4. Will you for the time to come, make conscience of daily and earnest prayer to God, that you may have a part in Christ and salvation ? do not go out of doors till you have

have breathed out these desires to God ; do not lie down to rest till you have breathed out these desires ; say not, God knoweth my necessity without so often praying ; for though he do, yet he will have you to know them and feel them, and exercise your desires and all the graces of his Spirit in these duties : It is he that hath commanded to pray continually, though he know your needs without, *1 Thes. 5. 17.* Christ himself spent whole nights in prayer, and encourageth us to this course, *Luke 18. 1.* If you will not be perswaded to this much, how can you say that you make not light of Christ and salvation ?

5. Will you for the time to come resolutely cast away your known sins at the command of Christ ? If you have been proud or contentious, or malicious and revengeful, be so no more. If you have been adulterers, or swearers, or cursers, be so no more. You cannot hold these, and yet set by Christ and salvation.

What say you ? Are you resolved to let them go ? If not, when you know tis the will of Christ, and he hath told you such shall not enter into his Kingdom, do not you make light of him ?

6. Will you for the time to come serve

R

God

God in the *dearest* as well as in the *cheapest* part of his service : not only with your tongues, but with your purses and your deeds ? shall the poor find that you set more by Christ then this world ? shall it appear in any good uses that Gods calls you to be liberal in, according to your abilities ? Pure Religion and undefiled before God is this, To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, *Jam. 1. ult.* Will you resolve to stick to Christ, and make sure this work of salvation, though it cost you all that you have in the world ? If you think these terms too dear, you make light of Christ, and will be judged accordingly.

7. Will you for the time to come make much of all things that tend to your salvation ; and take every help that God offereth you, and gladly make use of all his Ordinances ? Attend upon his strengthening Sacraments, spend the Lords own day in these holy imployments. Instruct your children and servants in these things, *Deut. 6. 6, 7.* get into good company that set their faces heaven-ward, and will teach you the way, and help you thither : and take heed of the company of wicked scorers, or foolish, voluptuous, fleshly men, or any that would hinder you in this work. Will you do these things ?

things ? Or will you shew that you are flightes of Ch rist by neglecting them ?

8. Will you do all this with delight, not as your toyl, but as your pleasure ? and take it for your highest honour that you may be Christs Disciples and may be *admitted* to serve and worship him ; and rejoyce with holy confidence in the sufficiency of that sacrifice by which you may have pardon of all your failings, and right to the inheritance of the Saints in light ? If you will do these things sincerely, you will shew that you set by Christ and salvation ; else not.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord, I have now done that work which I came upon ; what effect it hath, or will have upon your hearts, I know not, nor is it any further in my power to accomplish that which my soul desireth for you. Were it the Lords will that I might have my wish herein, the words that you have this day heard should so stick by you, that the secure should be awakened by them, and none of you should perish by the slighting of your salvation. I cannot now follow you to your several habitations, to apply this Word to your particular necessities : but oh that I could make every mans *conscience* a Preacher to himself, that it might do it, which is ever with you : that the next

time you go prayerless to bed, or about your business, conscience might cry out, *Dost thou set no more by Christ and thy salvation?* that the next time you are tempted to think hardly of an holy and diligent life, (I will not say to deride it as *more ado then needs*) Conscience might cry out to thee, *Dost thou set so light by Christ and thy salvation?* that the next time you are ready to rush upon known sin, and to please your fleshly desires against the command of God, Conscience might cry out, *Is Christ and salvation no more worth, then to cast them away, or venture them for thy lusts?* that when you are following the world with your most eager desires, forgetting the world to come and the change that is a little before you, Conscience might cry out to you, *Is Christ and salvation no more worth then so?* That when you are next spending the Lords day in idleness or vain sports, Conscience might tell you what you are doing. In a word, that in all your neglects of duty, your sticking at the supposed labour or cost of a godly life; yea in all your cold and lazy prayers and performances, Conscience might tell you how unsutable such endeavours are to the reward; and that Christ and salvation should not be so slighted. I will say no more but this at this time, It is

a thousand pitties that when God hath provided a Saviour for the world, and when Christ hath suffered so much for their sins, and made so full a satisfaction to Justice, and purchased so glorious a Kingdom for his Saints, and all this is offered so freely to sinners, to lost unworthy sinners, even for nothing, that yet so many millions should everlastingly perish because they *make light of their Saviour and salvation, and prefer the vain world and their lusts before them*. I have delivered my Message; the Lord open your hearts to receive it; I have perswaded you with the *word* of truth and soberness; the Lord perswade you more effectually, or else all this is lost.

FINIS.

TRUE
Christianity;

OR,

Christs absolute Dominion, and Mans necessary Self-resignation and subjection.

In two Afsize Sermons
preached at WORCESTER.

By RICH. BAXTER.

LONDON,

Printed for Nevil Simmons bookseller
in Kidderminster. 1658.

A Sermon

OF

The absolute Dominion of God-Redeemer,
and the necessity of being devoted and living to him.

Preached before the Honorable Judge of Assize at Worcester, Aug. 2. 1654.

By *Rich. Baxter.*

Rom. 14. 9.

*For to this end Christ both dyed and rose,
and revived, that he might be Lord
both of the dead and Living.*

London, Printed for Nevil Simmons
Bookseller in Kederminster, 1658.



To the Right Honourable
Serjeant Glyn, Now Judge of
Assise in this Circuit.

My Lord,



ould my excuse have satisfied you, this Sermon had been confined to the Auditory it was prepared for: I cannot expect that it should find that Candor and favour with every Reader, as it did with the Hearers. When it must speak to All, the guilty will hear, and then it will gall. Innocency is patient in hearing a reproof, and charitable in the interpretation; but Guilt will

The Epistle Dedicatory.

will smart and quarrel, and usually make a fault in him that findeth one in them. Yet I confess this is but a poor justification of his silence that hath a Call to speak. Both my Calling and this Sermon would condemn me, if on such grounds I should draw back: But my Backwardness was caused by the reason which I then tendered your Lordship as my excuse, viz. Because here is nothing but what is common, and that it is in as common and homely a dress. And I hope we need not fear that our labours are dead, unless the press shall give them life. We bring not Sermons to Church, as we do a Corps for a burial: If there be life in them, and life in the Hearers, the connaturality will cause such an amicable closure, that through the Reception, Retention, and operation of the soul, they will be the immortal seed of a life everlasting. But yet seeing the Press hath a louder voice then mine, and the matter in hand is of such exceeding necessity, I shall not refuse upon such an
in-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

invitation, to be a remembrancer to the world, of a Doctrine and duty of such high concernment: though they have heard it never so oft before. Seeing therefore I must present that now to your eyes, which I lately presented to your ears, I shall take the boldness to add one word of Application in this Epistle, which I thought not seasonable to mention in the first delivery: and that shall be to your Lordship and all others in your present case, that are elected members of this expected Parliament. Be sure to remember the interest of your sovereign, the great Lord Protector of Heaven and Earth: And as ever you will make him a comfortable accompt of your Power, Abilities, and Opportunities of serving him, see that you prefer his interest before your own, or any mans on earth. If you go not thither as sent by him, with a firm resolution to serve him first, you were better sit at home: forget not that he hath laid claim to you, and to all that you have, and all that you can have, and all that you can do

The Epistle Dedicatory.

do I am bold with all possible earnestness, to entreat you, yea as Christs Minister to require you in his Name, to study and remember his business and interest; and see that it have the chief place in all your consultations: Watch against the incroachments of your own carnal interests, consult not with flesh and blood, nor give it the hearing when it shall offer you its advice. How subtilly will it insinuate, how importunately will it urge you, how certainly will it marr all, if you do not constantly and resolvedly watch! O how hard, but how happy is it to conquer this carnal self! Remember still that you are not your own, that you have an unseen Master that must be pleased, whoever be displeased; and an unseen Kingdom to be obtained, and an invisible soul that must be saved, though all the world be lost. Fix your eye still on him that made and redeemed you, and upon the ultimate end of your Christian race; and do nothing wilfully, unworthy such a Master, and such an end. Often renew your self-resignation,
and

The Epistle Dedicatory.

and devote your self to him ; sit close at his work, and be sure that it be His, both in the Matter, and in your Intent. If Conscience should at any time ask, (Whose work are you now doing ?) or a man should pluck you by the sleeve, and say, (Sir, Whose Cause are you now pleading ?) See that you have the answer of a Christian at hand ; delay not Gods work till you have done your own, or any ones else : You'l best secure the Common-wealth and your own interest, by looking first to His. By neglecting this, and being carnally wise, we have wheel'd about so long in the Wilderness, and lost those advantages against the Powers of Darkness, which we know not whether we shall ever recover again. It is the great astonishment of sober men, and not the least reproach that ever was cast on our holy Profession, to think with what a Zeal for the work of Christ, men seemed to be animated in the beginning of our disagreements ; and how deeply they did engage themselves to him in solemn Vows , Protestations, and
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The Epistle Dedicatory.

*Covenants; and what advantages carnal self hath since got, and turned the stream another way! so that the same men have since been the instruments of our calamity, in breaking in pieces, and dishonouring the Churches of Christ; yea and gone so neer to the taking down (as much as in them lay) the whole Ministry that stands approved in the Land: O do not by trifling, give advantage to the Tempter to destroy your work and you together. Take warning by the sad experiences of what is past; bestir you speedily and vigorously for Christ, as knowing your opposition and the shortness of your time: Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. If you ask me wherein this interest of Christ doth consist? I shall tell you but in a few unquestionable particulars. 1. In the main, that truth, godliness, and honesty, be countenanced and encouraged, and their contraries by all fit means suppressed. 2. In order to this, that unworthy men be removed from Magistracy and Ministry, and
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the places supplied with the fittest that can be had. 3. That a competent maintenance may be procured where it is wanting, especially for Cities and great Towns, where more Teachers are so necessary in some proportion to the number of souls, and on which the Country doth so much depend. Shall an age of such high pretences to Reformation, and Zeal for the Churches, alienate so much, and then leave them destitute, and say, It cannot be had? 4. That right means be used with speed and diligence, for the healing of our divisions, and the uniting of all the true Churches of Christ (at least in these Nations; and O that your endeavours might be extended much further) to which end I shall mention but these two means of most evident necessity. 1. That there be one Scripture-Creed, or confession of Faith, agreed on by a general assembly of able Ministers duly and freely chosen hereunto, which shall contain nothing but matter of evident Necessity and Verity. This will serve 1. For a Test to the Churches, to discern

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cern the sound Professors from the unsound (as to their doctrine) and to know them with whom they may close as Brethren, and whom they must reject. 2. For a Test to the Magistrate, of the Orthodox to be encouraged, and of the intollerably Heterodox, which it seems is intended in the 37. Article of the late formed Government, where all that will have liberty, must profess (faith in God by Jesus Christ) which in a Christian sense must comprehend every true fundamental, or Article of our faith: and no doubt, it is not the bare speaking of those words, in an unchristian sense that is intended. (As if a Kanter should say, that himself is God, and his mate is Jesus Christ.)

2. That there be a publick establishment of the necessary liberty of the Churches, to meet by their Officers and Delegates on all just occasions, in assemblies smaller or greater, (even National when it is necessary) Seeing without such associations and communion in assemblies, the unity and concord

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cord of the Churches is not like to be maintained. I exclude not the Magistrates interest or oversight to see that they do not transgress their bounds. As you love Christ, and his Church and Gospel, and mens souls, neglect not these unquestionable points of his interest, and make them your first and chiefest business, and let none be preferred before him, till you know them to be of more authority over you, and better friends to you then Christ is. Should there be any among you that cherish a secret Root of Infidelity, after such pretences to the purest Christianity, and are zealous of Christ lest he should over-top them, and do set up an interest inconsistent with his sovereignty, and thereupon grow jealous of the liberties and power of his Ministers, and of the unity & strength of his Church: and think it their best policy to keep under his Ministers, by hindering them from the exercise of their office, and to foment divisions, and hinder our union, that they may have parties ready to serve their ends: I would not be in the case of,
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such men, when God ariseth to judge them, for all the Crowns and Kingdoms on earth! If they stumble on this stone, it will break them in pieces: but if it fall upon them, it will grind them to powder. They may seem to prevail against him a while, when their supposed success is but a prosperous self-destroying: but mark the end, when his wrath is kindled, yea, but a little: and when these his enemies that would not he should raign over them, are brought forth and destroyed before him, then they will be convinced of the folly of their Rebellion: in the mean time let wisdom be justified of her Children.

My Lord, I had not troubled you with so many words, had I not judged it probable that many more whom they concern may peruse them. I remain,

Your Lordships Servant in the
Work of Christ,

*August 5.
1654.*

Rich. Baxter.



A Sermon of the Absolute Dominion of God-Redeemer; And the necessity of being Devoted and Living to him.

I Cor. 6. 19, 20.

— *And ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods.*



Undamentals in Religion are the life of the superstructure. Like the Vitals and Naturals in the body, which are first necessary for themselves, and then also for the quickning and nourishing of the rest: there being no life or growth of the inferior parts, but what they do receive from the powers of these; its but a dead discourse which is not animated by these greater Truths, what ever the bulk of its materials may consist

sist of. The frequent repetition therefore of these, is as excusable as frequent preaching. And they that nauseate it as loathsome bathologie, do love Novelty better then Verity, and playing with words to please the fancy, rather then closing with Christ to save the soul. And as it is the chief part of the cure in most external maladies to corroborate the vital and natural powers, which then will do the work themselves; so is it the most effectual course, for the cure of particular miscarriages in mens lives to further the main work of grace upon their hearts: could we make men better Christians, it would do much to make them better Magistrates, Councillors, Jurers, Witnesses, Subjects, Neighbours, &c. And this must be done by the deeper impress of those vital Truths, and the Good in them exhibited, which are adequate objects of our vital graces. Could we help you to wind up the spring of faith, and so move the first wheel of Christian Love, we should find it the readiest and surest means to move the inferiour wheels of duty. The flaws and irregular motions without, do shew that something is amiss within; which if we could rectifie we might the easier mend the rest: I shall suppose therefore that I need no more Apologie for chusing such a subject at such a season as this, then for bringing bread to a feast.

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And if I meditate the brain and heart, for the curing of senseless Paralytick members, or the inordinate Convulsive motions of any hearers, I have the warrant of the Apostles example in my Text. Among other great enormities in the Church of *Corinth*, he had these three to reprehend and heal : First their sidings and divisions occasioned by some factious self-seeking teachers. Secondly, their personal contentions by Law-suites, & that before unbelieving Judges. Thirdly, the foul sin of fornication, which some among them had fallen into; the great cure which he useth to all these, & more especially to the last, is the urging of these great foundation Truths; whereof one is in the words before my Text; *viz.* the Right of the Holy Ghost; the other in the words of my Text which contains first. A denial of any Right of propriety in themselves. Secondly, an asserting of Christs propriety in them. Thirdly, the proof of this from his purchase, which is his Title. Fourthly, their duty concluded from the former premises; which is to glorifie God, and that with the whole man; with the spirit, because God is a spirit and loaths hypocrisie; with the body, which is particularly mentioned, because it seems they were encouraged to fornication by such conceits, that it was but an act of the flesh, and not of the mind, and therefore as

they thought the smaler sin. The Apostles words from last to first, according to the order of Intention, do expresse first mans duty, to glorifie God with soul and body, and not to serve our lusts. Secondly, the great fundamental obligation to this duty, Gods dominion or propriety. 3^{ly}. The foundation of that Dominion, Christs purchase; according to the order of execution from first to last, these three great fundamentals of our religion, lie thus. First Christs purchase. Secondly, Gods propriety thence arising. Thirdly, mans duty, wholly to glorifie God, arising from both. The Argument lies thus. They that are not their own, but wholly Gods, should wholly glorifie God, and not serve their lusts: but you are not your own, but wholly Gods: therefore you should wholly glorifie God, and not serve your lusts. The major is clear by the common light of nature. Every one should have the use of their own. The Minor is proved thus. They that are bought with a price are not their own, but his that bought them; *but you are bought with a price*: therefore, &c. For the meaning of the terms briefly: [*ἐαυτῶν*] *vestri*, as the vulgar; *vestri juris*, as Beza and others; is most fitly expressed by our English [your own] [ye are bought:] a *Synecdoche generis*, saith *Piscator*; for [ye are redeemed] [with a price] There is no buying without a price:

price : This therefore is an Emphaticall *Pleonasmus*, as *Beza*, *Piscator*, and others: as to see with the eyes, to hear with the ears : Or else [a price] is put for [a great price] as *Calvin*, *Peter Martyr*, and *Piscator* rather thinks : And therefore the Vulgar adds the Epithet [*magno*] and the Arabick [*pretioso*] as *Beza* notes; as agreeing to that of 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. I see not but we may suppose the Apostle to respect both the purchase and the greatness of the price : as *Grotius* and some others do, [Glorifie God] that is, by using your bodies and souls wholly for him, and abstaining from those lusts which do dishonor him. The Vulgar adds [& portate] *q. d.* bear God about in your hearts, and let his spirit dwell with you instead of lust. But this addition is contrary to all our Greek Copies. *Grotius* thinks that some Copies had [*ἀεὶ τὸν θεὸν*] and thence some unskilful Scribe did put [*ἀεὶ τε*] however it seems that reading was very antient, when not only *Austin*, but *Cyprian* and *Tertullian* followed it, as *Beza* noteth. The last words [and in your spirit, which are Gods] are out of all the old Latin Translations, and therefore its like out of the Greek, which they used : But they are in all the present Greek Copies, except our *M.S.* as also in the Syriack and Arabick version.

The rest of the explication shall follow the Doctrines,

Doctrines, which are these.

Doct. 1. We are bought with a price.

Doct. 2. Because we are bought so, we are not our own, but his that bought us.

Doct. 3. Because we are not our own, but wholly Gods, therefore we must not serve our lusts, but glorifie him in the Body and Spirit. In these three conclusions is the substance of the Text; which I shall first explain, and then make application of them in that order as the Apostle here doth.

The Points that need explication are these.

First, in what sense we are said to be bought with a price? who bought us? and of whom? and from what? and with what price?

Secondly, How we are Gods own upon the Title of this purchase.

Thirdly, How we are not our own.

Fourthly, What it is to glorifie God in Body and in Spirit, on this account.

Fifthly, Who they be that on this ground are or may be urged to this duty.

First, For the first of these, whether *buying* here be taken properly or Metaphorically, I will not now enquire.

First, mankind by sin became guilty of death, liable to Gods wrath, and a slave to Satan, and his own lusts. The sentence in part was past and execution begun, the rest would have followed,

followed, if not prevented. This is the bondage from which we are redeemed.

Secondly, he that redeemed us, is the Son of God : himself God and man ; and the Father by the Son. *Acts 20 28. He purchased us with his own blood.*

Thirdly, the price was the whole humiliation of Christ ; in the first act whereof (his incarnation) the God-head was alone, which by humbling it self, did suffer reputatively, which could not really : In the rest the whole person was the sufferer, but still the humane nature Really, and the Divine but Reputatively. And why we may not add as part of the price, the merit of that obedience wherein his suffering did not consist, I yet see not. But from whom were we redeemed ?

Ans. From *Satan* by rescue against his will : From Gods wrath or Vindictive justice by his own procurement and consent. He substituted for us such a sacrifice, by which he could as fully attain the ends of his righteous Government, in the Demonstration of his justice and hatred of sin, as if the sinner had suffered himself. And in this sound sense, it is far from being an absurdity, as the Socinian dreameth, for God to satisfy his own Justice, or to buy us of himself : or redeem us from himself.

2. Next let us consider, how we are Gods upon

upon the Title of this purchase. By [God] here is meant both the Son, who being God, hath procured a right in us by his Redemption; and also the Father, who sent his Son, and redeemed us by him, and to whom it was that the Son redeemed us, *Rev. 5. 9. Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.* In one word, it is God as Redeemer, the manhood also of the second person included, that hath purchased this right. Here you must observe that God as Creator had a plenary Right of propriety and Government, on which he founded the Law of works that then was. This right he hath not lost: Our fall did lose our Right in him, but could not destroy his right in us. Because it destroyed our right, therefore the promissory part of that Law was immediately thereupon dissolved, or ceased through our incapacity (and therefore Divines say, that as a Covenant it ceased) but because it destroyed not Gods Right, therefore the preceptive, and penall parts of that Law do still remain. But how remain? In their being: but not alone, or without remedy. For the Son of God became a sacrifice in our stead; not that we might absolutely, immediately, or *ipso facto*, be fully delivered, or that any man should *ab ipsa hostia* from the very sacrifice as made, have a right to the great benefits of personall, plenary Reconciliation

conciliation and Remission, and everlasting life; but that the necessity of perishing through the unsatisfiedness of justice for the alone offences against the Law of works being removed from mankind, they might all be delivered up to him as *Proprietary & Rector*, that he might rule them as his redeemed ones, and make for them such new Laws of grace, for the conveyances of his benefits, as might demonstrate the wisdom and mercy of our redeemer, and be most suitable to his ends. The world is now morally dead in sin, though naturally alive. Christ hath redeemed them, but will cure them by the actuall conveyance of the benefits of Redemption, or not at all. He hath undertaken to this end, himself to be their Physitian, to cure all that will come to him, and take him so to be, and trust him, and obey him in the Application of his Medicines. He hath erected an Hospitall, his Church, to this end; and commanded all to come into this Ark. Those that are far distant, he first commandeth to come nearer: and those that are near, he inviteth to come in. Too many do refuse and perish in their refusall. He will not suffer all to do so, but mercifully boweth the wils of his Elect, and by an insuperable powerful drawing, compels them to come in. You may see then that here is a *Novum jus & Domini & Imperii*, a new right of Propriety and

and rule, founded on the new bottom of Redemption: But that this doth not destroy the old which was founded on Creation; but is in the very nature and use of it, an emendative addition. Redemption is to mend the Creature, not of any defect that was left in the Creation, but from the ruine which came by our defacing transgression. The Law of grace upon this Redemption, is superadded to the Law of nature given on the Creation: not to amend any imperfections in that Law, but to save the sinner from its unsufferable penalty, by dissolving its obligation of him thereto. And thus in its nature and use it is a remedying Law. And so you may see that Christ is now the Owner, and by right the Governor of the whole world, on the Title of redemption, as God before was, and still is on the Title of Creation.

3. By this you may also perceive in what sense, *we are not our own*. In the strictest sense there is no proprietary, or absolute Lord in the world but God. No man can say this is fully and strictly mine. God gives us indeed whatever we enjoy; but his giving is not as mans: we part with our Propriety in that which we give: but God gives nothing so. His giving to us makes it not the less his own. As a man giveth his goods to his steward to dispose of for his use, or instruments to his servant to do his work with,

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so God giveth his benefits to us. Or at the utmost, as you give cloaths to your child, which are more yours still then his, and you may take them away at your pleasure. I confess when God hath told us that he will not take them away, he is as it were obliged in fidelity to continue them, but yet doth not hereby let go his propriety. And so Christ bids us call no man on Earth Father, that is, our absolute Lord or Ruler, because we have but one such master, who is in Heaven. *Mat. 23. 7, 8, 9, 10.* So that you may see by this, what Propertie is left us, and what right we have to our selves, and our Possessions : Even such as a steward in his Masters goods , or a servant in his tools, or a child in his coat, which is a propriety improper, subordinate and *secundum quid*, and will secure us against the usurpation of another: One servant may not take his fellows instrument from him, nor one child his brothers coat from him, without the parents or Masters consent. They have them for their use, though not the full propriety : It may be called a propriety in respect to our fellow-servant, though it be not properly so as we stand in respect to God. We have right enough to confute the Leveller : but not to exempt either us or ours from the claim and use of our absolute Lord.

4. For the fourth Question, What it is to glorifie

glorifie God in body , and spirit, I answer in a word : It is, when upon true believing apprehensions of his right to us, and of our great obligations to him as our Redeemer, we heartily and unfeignedly devote our selves to him, and live as a people so devoted ; so bending the chiefest of our care and study, how to please him in exactest obedience, that the glory of his mercy and holiness, and of his wise and righteous Laws, may be seen in our conversations ; and that the holy conformity of our lives to these Laws ; may shew that there is the like conformity in our minds, and that they are written in our hearts ; when the excellency of the Christian Religion is so apparent in the excellency of our lives, causing us to do that which no others can imitate, that the lustre of our good works may shine before men, and cause them to glorifie our Father in Heaven. To conclude, when we stil respect God as our only Sovereign, and Christ as our Redeemer, and his Spirit as our Sanctifier, and his Law as our Rule ; that the doing of his will, and the denying of our own, is the daily work of our lives, and the promoting of his blessed ends is our end : this is the glorifying of God that hath Redeemed us.

5. The last question is, who they be that are and may be urged to glorifie God on this ground, that he hath bought them ? Doubtless, only those

those whom he hath bought ; but who are those ? It discourageth me to tell you , because among the godly , it is a controversie ; but if they will controvert points of such great moment , they cannot disoblige or excuse us from preaching them . Among the variety of mens opinions , it is safe to speak in the Language of the Holy Ghost , and accordingly to believe , *viz.* that [as by the offence of one , Judgement came upon all men to condemnation , even so by the righteousness of one , the free gift came upon all men to Justification of life , *Rom.* 5. 18.] And that he gave himself a ransom for all , and is the only Mediator between God and man , *1 Tim.* 2. 5, 6. That he is the propitiation for our sins , and not for ours only , but also for the sins of the whole world , *1 John* 2. 2. That God is the Saviour of all men , especially of those that believe , *1 Tim.* 4. 10. That he is the Saviour of the world , *John* 4. 42. *1 John* 4. 14, 15. That he tasteth death for every man , *Heb.* 2. 9. with many the like ; It is very sad to consider how mens unskilfulness to reconcile Gods general grace with his special , and to assign to each its proper part , hath made the Pelagians and their Successors to deny the special grace , and too many of late , no less dangerously to deny the general grace ; and what contentions these two

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erroneous parties have maintained, and still maintain in the Church, and how few observe or follow that true and sober mean which *Austin* the Maul of the Pelagians, and his scholars *Prosper* and *Fulgentius* walked in ! If when our dark confused heads are unable to assign each truth its place, and rightly to order each wheel, and pin in the admirable fabrick of Gods Revelations, we shall therefore fall a wrangling against them, and reject them, we may then be drawn to blaspheme the Trinity, to reject either Christs humane nature or his Divine ; and what truth shall we not be in danger to lose ? To think this general grace to be inconsistent with the special, is no wiser then to think the foundation inconsistent with the Fabrick that is built thereupon ; and that the builders themselves should have such thoughts, is a matter of compassionate consideration to the friends of the Church. Doubtless Christ dyed not for all alike, nor with equal intentions of saving them ; and yet he hath born the sins of all men on the Cross, and was a sacrifice, propitiation and ransom for all ; even they that bring in damnable heresies, deny the Lord that bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 Pet. 2. 1. God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He

He that believeth on him is not condemned ; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. John 3. 17, 18, 19. I doubt not but my Text doth warrant me to tell you all, that you are not your own, but are bought with a price, and therefore must glorifie him that bought you : And I am very confident, that if any one at Judgement will be the advocate of an unbeliever, and say, he deserves not a sorer punishment for sinning against the Lord that bought him, his plea will not be taken : Or if any such would comfort the consciences in Hell, or go about to cure them of so much of their torment, by telling them, that they never sinned against one that redeemed them, nor ever rejected the blood of Christ shed for them, and therefore need not accuse themselves of any such sin, those poor sinners would not be able to believe them. If it be only the Elect with whom we must thus argue [you are not your own: you are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God] then can we truly plead thus with none till we know them to be Elect, which will not be in this world. I do not think *Paul* knew them all to be Elect that

he wrote to ; I mean absolutely chosen to salvation ; nor do I think he would so peremptorily affirm them to be bought with a price, who were fornicators, defrauders, contentious, drunk at the Lords supper, &c. and from hence have argued against their sins, if he had taken this for a Priviledge proper to the elect. I had rather say to scandalous sinners [you are bought with a price , therefore glorifie God] then [you are absolutely elect to salvation, therefore glorifie God.] And I believe, that as it is the sin of Apostates to [Crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh] *Heb. 6. 5, 6.* so is it their misery that *[there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgement, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries, because they have trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing, Heb. 10. 26, 27, 28.* Lastly, I judge it also a good argument to draw us from offending others, and occasioning their sin, that [through us, our weak Brother shall perish, for whom Christ dyed, 1 Cor. 8. 3.] So much for explication.

I would next proceed to the confirmation of the Doctrines here contained, but that they are so clear in the Text, and in many other, that I think it next to needless ; and we have
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now no time for needless work ; and therefore shall only cite these two or three Texts, which confirm almost all that I have said together.

Rem. 14. 9. For to this end Christ both dyed and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. We thus judge that if one dyed for all, then were all dead: and that he dyed for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which dyed for them and rose again. Matth. 28. 18, 19, 20. All power is given me in Heaven and in Earth. Go ye therefore, Disciple all Nations, Baptizing them, &c. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. 1 Pet. 1. 17, 18. If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth every man according to his works, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation — but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot. These Texts speak to the same purpose with that which I have in hand.

Use. In applying these very useful truths, would time permit, I should begin at the Intellect, with a confutation of divers contrary errors, and a collection of many observable Consecrations. It would go better with all Com-

monwealths and Princes on Earth, if they well considered that the absolute Propriety and Sovereignty of God-Redeemer, is the Basis of all lawful Societies and Governments : and that no man hath any absolute Propriety, but only the use of the Talents that God doth entrust him with : that the sovereignty of the Creature is but Analogical, *secundum quid*; improper, and subordinate to God the proper Sovereign ; that it belongs to him to appoint his inferior Officers ; that there is no power but from God ; and that he giveth none against himself ; that a Theocracy is the Government that must be desired and submitted to, whether the subordinate part be Monarchical, Aristocratical, or Democratical : and the rejecting of this was the Israelites sin, in choosing them a King ; that it is still possible and necessary to live under this Theocracy, though the Administration be not by such extraordinary means as among the Israelites ; that all humane Laws are but by Laws subordinate to God. How far his Laws must take place in all Governments : how far those Laws of men are *ipso facto Null*, that are unquestionably destructive of the Laws of God : how far they that are not their own, may give Authority to others ; and what aspect these Principles have upon Liberty in that latitude as it is taken by some, and upon the

the Authority of the multitude, especially in Church-Government; should I stand on these and other the like Consequents, which these Fundamentals in hand might lead us to discuss, I should prevent that more seasonable application which I intend, and perhaps be thought in some of them to meddle beyond my bounds. I'll only say, that God is the first and the last, in our Ethicks and Politicks, as well as in our Physicks; that as there is no creature which he made not, so it is no good right of Property or Government which he some way gives not; that all Commonwealths not built on this foundation are as Castles in the air, or as childrens tottering structures, which in the very framing are prepared for their ruine, and strictly are no Commonwealths at all; and those Governors that rule no more for God then for themselves, shall be dealt with as Traytors to the universal Sovereign. Thus far at least must our Politicks be Divine, unless we will be meer confederate Rebels.

But it is yet a closer application which I intend: though we are not our own, yet every mans welfare should be so dear to himself, that methinks every man of you should presently enquire how far you are concerned in the business which we have in hand. I'll tell you how far. The Case here described is all our own.

We are bought with a price, and therefore not our own, and therefore must live to him that bought us. We must do it, or else we violate our Allegiance, and are Traitors to our Redeemer. We must do it, or else we shall perish as despisers of his blood. It is no matter of indifference, nor a duty which may be dispenced with. That God who is our Owner by Creation and Redemption, and who doth hitherto keep our souls in these bodies, by whose meer will and power you are all here alive before him this day, will shortly call you before his bar, where these matters will be more seriously and searhingly enquired after. The great Question of the day will then be this, Whether you have been heartily devoted to your Redeemer, and lived to him? or to your carnal selves? Upon the resolution of this question your everlasting Salvation or Damnation will depend. What think you then? Should not this Question be now put home, by every rational Hearer to his own heart? But I suppose some will say, There is no man that wholly lives to God, for all are sinners: how then can our Salvation depend so much on this? I answer in a word: Though no man pay God all that he oweth him, yet no man shall be saved, that giveth him not the preheminance. He will own none as true Subjects, that do not cordially own him in
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his Sovereignty. Be it known to you all, there shall not a man of you enter into his Kingdom, nor ever see his face in peace, that giveth him not the chiefest room in your hearts, and maketh not his work your chiefest business. He will be no underling or servant to your flesh. He will be served with the *Best*, if he cannot have *All*. And in this sense it is that I say the Question will be put in that great day, by the Judge of all, Whether God or our carnal selves were preferred? and whether we lived to him that bought us, or to our flesh? Beloved Hearers! I will not ask you whether you indeed believe that there will be such a day. I will take it for granted, while you call your selves Christians; much less will I question whether you would then be saved or condemned. Nature will not suffer you to be willing of such a misery, though corruption make you too willing of the cause. But the Common stupidity of the world doth perswade me to ask you this, Whether you think it meet that men who must be so solemnly examined upon this Point, and whose life or death depends on the decision, should not examine themselves on it beforehand, and well consider what answer they must then make? and whether any pains can be too great in so needfull a work? and whether he that miscarrieth to save a labour, do not madly betray

betray his soul unto perdition? as if such rational diligence were worse then Hell, or his present carnal ease were more desirable then his Salvation. Let us then rouse up our selves Brethren, in the fear of God, and make this a day of judgement to our selves. Let us know whether we are Children of Life or of Death. O how can a man that is well in his wits, enjoy with any comfort the things of this world, before he know, at least in probability, what he shall enjoy in the next! How can men go cheerfully up and down about the business of this life, before they have faithfully laboured to make sure that it shall go well with them in the life to come ! That we may now know this without deceit, let us all as in the presence of the Living God, lay bare our hearts, examine them, and judge them by this portion of his word according to the evidence.

7. Whoever he be that takes not himself for his own, but lives to his Redeemer, he is one that hath found himself really undone, and hath unfeignedly confessed the forfeiture of his Salvation; and finding that Redemption hath been made by Christ, and that there is hope and life to be had in him, and none but in him, as he gladly receives the tidings, so he carefully acknowledgeth the right of his Redeemer, and in a sober, deliberate and voluntary Covenant renounceth

nounceth the world, the flesh and the Devil, and resigneth up himself to Christ as his due. He saith [*Lord, I have too long served thine Enemies and mine own, by cleaving to my self, and forsaking God, I have lost both my self and God. Wilt thou be my Saviour and the Physician of my soul, and wash me with thy blood, and repair the ruines of my soul by thy spirit, and I am willing to be thine; I yield up my self to the conduct of thy grace, to be saved in thy way, and fitted for thy service, and live to God from whom I have revolted.*] This is the Case of all that are sincere.

By many Scriptures we might quickly confirm this, if it were lyable to question. *Luke 14. 25, 26. If any man come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple; and whosoever doth not bear his Cross and come after me, cannot be my Disciple; So ver. 33. Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple; which is expounded, Mat. 10 37. He that loveth Father or Mother more then me, is not worthy of me. Mat. 16. 24. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. Plal. 73. 25, 26, 27. Whom
have*

have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. Psal. 16. 5. *The Lord is the Portion of mine Inheritance, &c.* Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26. *Moses refused honor, chose rather to suffer affliction with the People of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches then the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect to the recompence of the reward.* I forbear citing more, the case being so evident, that God is set highest in the heart of every sound Believer, they being in covenant resigned to him as his *Own*. On the contrary, most of the *unsanctified* are Christians but in name, because they were educated to this profession, and it is the common Religion of the Country where they live, and they hear none make question of it; or if they do, it is to their own disgrace, the name of Christ having got this advantage to be every where among us well spoken of, even by those that shall perish for neglecting him and his Laws. These men have resigned their names to Christ, but reserved their hearts to flesh-pleasing vanities. Or if under Conviction and terror of Conscience, they do make any resignation of their souls to Christ, it comes short of the true resignation of the sanctified in these particulars.

1. It is a firm and rooted belief of the Gospel which is the cause of sincere resignation to Christ.

Christ. They are so fully perswaded of the truth of those things which Christ hath done, and promised to do hereafter, that they will venture all that they have in this world, and their everlasting state upon it : Whereas the belief of self-deceivers is only superficial, staggering, not rooted, and will not carry them to such adventures. *Mat. 13. 21, 22, 23,*

2. Sincere self-resignation is accompanied with such a love to him that we are devoted to, which overtoppeth (as to the rational part) all other love. The soul hath a prevailing complacency in God, and closeth with him as its chiefest good ; *Psal. 73 25. & 63. 3.* But the unsanctified have no such complacency in him ; they would fain please him by their flatteries, lest he should do them any hurt ; but might they enjoy but the pleasures of this world, they could be well content to live without him.

3. Sincere self-resignation is a departing from our carnal selves and all Creatures as they stand in competition with Christ for our hearts ; and so it containeth a Crucifying of the flesh, and mortification of all its lusts. *Gal. 5. 24. Rom, 8. 1. to 14,* There is a hearty renouncing of former contradictory Interests and delights, that Christ may be set highest and chiefly delighted in. But self-deceivers are never truly mortified, when they seem to devote themselves

themselves more seriously to Christ : there is a contrary prevailing Interest in their mindes ; their fleshly felicity is nearer to their hearts, and this world is never unfeignedly renounced.

4. Sincere self-resignation is resolved upon deliberation, and not a rash inconsiderate promise, which is afterwards revert. The illuminated see that perfection in God, that vanity in the Creature, that desirable sufficiency in Christ, and emptiness in themselves, that they firmly resolve to cast themselves on him, and be his alone ; and though they cannot please him as they would, they'l dye before they'l change their Master ; but with self-deceivers it is not thus.

5. Sincere resignation is *absolute* and *unreserved*. Such do not Capitulate and condition with Christ [I will be thine so far, and no further ; so thou wilt but save my estate, or credit, or life.] But self-deceivers have ever such *Reserves* in their hearts, though they do not express them, nor perhaps themselves discern them. They have secret Limitations, Exceptions and Conditions: they have ever a salve for their worldly safety or felicity, and will rather venture upon a threatned Misery which they see not, though everlasting, then upon a certain Temporary misery which they see. These deep Reservers are the soul of Hypocrisie.

6. Sincere

6. Sincere self-resignation is fixed and habituate; it is not forced by a moving Sermon, or a dangerous sickness, and then forgotten and laid aside; but it is become a fixed habit in the soul; it is otherwise with self-deceivers; Though they will oblige themselves to Christ with vows in a time of fear and danger, yet so loose is the knot, that when the danger seems over, their bonds fall off. Its one thing to be affrighted, and another to have the heart quite changed and renewed. Its one thing to hire our selves with a Master in our necessities, and then serve our selves, or run away; and another thing to nail our ears to his door, and say, I love thee, and therefore will not depart.

So much for the first mark of one that lives not as his own, but as Gods, to wit *sincere self-resignation*.

The second is this.

2. As the heart is thus devoted to God, so also is the life, where men do truly take themselves for his: And that will appear in these three particulars.

1. The Principal study and care of such men, is how to please God and promote his interest, and do his work: this is it that they most seriously mind and contrive. Their own felicity they seek in this way, 1 Cor. 7. 32, 33. Rom. 6. 11, 13, 16. Col. 1. 10. & 3, 1, 2, 3. Phil.

Phil. 1. 20, 21, 24. It is not so with the unsanctified, they drive on another design. Their own work is principally minded, and their carnal interest preferred to Christs. They live to the flesh, and make provision for it, to satisfy its desires, *Rom.* 13. 14.

2. It is the chiefest delight of a man devoted to God, to see Christs interest prosper and prevail. It doth him more good to see the Church flourish, the Gospel succeed, the souls of men brought in to God, and all things fitted to his blessed pleasure, then it would do him to prosper himself in the world; to do good to mens bodies, much more to their souls, is more pleasing to him, then to be honourable or rich. To give is sweeter to him then to receive. His own matters he respects as lower things, that come not so neer his heart as Gods. But with the unsanctified it is not so, their prosperity and honours are most of their delight, and the absence of them their greatest trouble.

3. With a man that is truly devoted to God, the interest of Christ doth bear down all contradicting interest in the ordinary course of his life: As his own unrighteous righteousness, so his own renounced carnal interest, is loss and dung to him in comparison of Christs, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. He cannot take himself to be a loser by that which is gain to the souls of men,
and

and tendeth to promote the interest of his Lord. He serveth God with the first and best, and lets his own work stand by till Christs be done, or rather *owneth* none but Christs: his own dishonour being lighter to him then Christs, and a ruined estate less grievous then a ruined Church; therefore doth he first seek Gods Kingdom, and its righteousness, *Matth. 6. 33.* and chooseth rather to neglect his flesh, his gain, his friends, his life, then the cause and work of Christ; it is far otherwise with the unsanctified; they will contentedly give Christ the most glorious titles, and full-mouthed commendations, *Luke 6. 46.* But they have one that is nearer their hearts then he, their carnal-self must sway the Scepter. God shall have all that the flesh can spare; if he will be content to be served with its leavings, they will serve him; if not, they must be excused: they can allow him no more. The trying time is the parting time; when God or the world must needs be neglected. In such a strait, the righteous are still righteous, *Revel. 22. 11.* But the unstedfast in the Covenant, do manifest their unstedfastness; and though they will not part with Christ professedly, nor without some witty distinctions and evasions, nor without great sorrow and pretence of continued fidelity, yet part they will, and shift for themselves,

and hold that they have as long as they can, *Luke* 18.23. In a word, the sanctified are heartily devoted to God, and live to him; and were they uncapable of serving or enjoying him, their lives would afford them little content, whatever else they did possess: but the unsanctified are more strongly addicted to their flesh, and live to their carnal selves; and might they securely enjoy the pleasures of this world, they could easily spare the fruition of God, and could be as willing to be dispenced with for his spiritual service, as to perform it. And thus I have given you the true description of those that live to their Redeemer, as being not their own; and those that live to themselves, as if they were not his that bought them.

Having thus told you what the Word saith, it followeth that we next enquire what your hearts say. You hear what you must be; will you now consider what you are? Are all the people that hear me this day, devoted in heart and life to their Redeemer? Do you all live as Christs, and not your own? If so, I must needs say it is an extraordinary Assembly, and such as I had never the happiness to know. O that it were so indeed, that we might rejoyce together, and magnifie our deliverer, in stead of reprehending you, or lamenting your unhappiness. But alas, we are not such strangers

gers in the World, as to be guilty of such a groundless judgement. Let us enquire more particularly into the case.

1. Are those so sincerely devoted to Christ ? and do they so deny themselves, whose daily thoughts and care, and labour, is how they may live in more reputation and content, and may be better provided for the satisfying of their flesh ? If they be low and poor, and their condition is displeasing to them, their greatest care is to repair it to their minds : if they be higher and more wealthy, their business is to keep it or increase it ; that hunt after honour, and thirst after a thriving and more plenteous state ; that can stretch their consciences to the size of all times, and humour those that they think may advance them, and be most humble servants to those above them, and contemptuously neglect whosoever is below them ; that will put their hands to the feet of those that they hope to rise by, and put their feet on the necks of their subdued adversaries, and trample upon all that stand in their way ; that applaud not men for their honesty, but their worldly honours, and will magnifie that man while he is capable of advancing them, whom they would have scorned if Providence had laid him in the dust : that are friends to all that befriend their interest and designs, and enemies

to the most upright that cross them in their course; that love not men so much because they love God, as because they love them; are these devoted to God, or to themselves? Is it for God or themselves, that men so industriously scramble for Honours and places of Government or of Gain? Will they use their offices or honours for God, that hunt after them as a prey, as if they had not burthen enough already, nor Talents enough to answer for neglecting! Are those men devoted to God, that can tread down his most unquestionable interest on earth, when it seems to be inconsistent with their own? Let the Gospel go down, let the Church be broken in pieces, let sound doctrine be despised, let Ministers be hindered or tired with vexations, let the souls of people sink or swim rather than they should be hindered in the way of their ambition. I shall leave it to the trial of another day, whether all the publick actions of this Age, with their effects, have been for God, or for self. This doth not belong to my examination, but to his that will thoroughly perform it ere long, and search these matters to the quick, and open them to the world. There were never higher pretences for God in an Age, then have been in this; had there been but answerable intentions and performances, his affairs and our own, had been

for him ? Is it his business that you mind ? How much of your time do you spend for him ? How much of your speech is for him ? How much of your Estates yearly is serviceable to his interest ? Let Conscience speak whether he have your studies and affections ; let your familiars be witnesses, whether he have your speeches and best endeavours ; let the Church witness, what you have done for it ; and the Poor witness, what you have done for them ; and the souls of ignorant and ungodly men, what you have done for them ; shew by the work you have done, who you have lived to, God or your carnal selves ; if indeed you have lived to God, something will be seen that you have done for him ; nay it is not a *something* that will serve the turn ; it must be the *Best*. Remember that it is by your Works that you shall be judged, and not by your pretences, professions, or complements ; your Judge already knows your Case, he needs no witnesses, he will not be mocked with saying you are for him ; shew it, or saying it will not serve.

Methinks now the consciences of some of you should prevent me, and preach over the sharper part of the Sermon to your selves, and say, [*I am the man that have lived to my self*] and so consider of the consequents of such a life : but I will leave this to
your

your Meditation when you come home, and next proceed to the exhortative part of Application.

Men, Brethren, and Fathers, the business that I come hither upon, is to proclaim Gods right to you, and all that is yours, even his new right of Redemption, supposing that of Creation; and to let you know, *that you are all bought with a price*, and therefore are not your own, but his that bought you, and must accordingly be dedicated and live to him. Honourable and Worshipful, and all men of what degree soever, I do here on the behalf, and in the name of Christ, lay claim to you all, to your souls and bodies, to all your faculties, abilities, and interests, on the title of Redemption; all is Gods. Do you acknowledge his Title, and consent unto his claim? what say you? are you his, or are you not? Dare you deny it? If any man dare be so bold, I am here ready to make good the claim of Christ. If you dare not deny it, we must take it as confessed. Bear witness all, that God laid claim to you and yours, and no man durst deny his Title. I do next therefore require you, and command you in his Name, *Give him his own: Render to God the things that are Gods.* Will you this day renounce your car-

nal selves, and freely confess you are not
 your own, and cheerfully and unreservedly
 resign your selves to God, and say, as *Josh.*
24. 51. As for me and my household, we will serve
the Lord. Do not ask what God will do with
 you; or how he will use you or dispose of you;
 trust him for that, and obey his will. Fear not
 evill from the chiefest good, unless it be in neg-
 lecting or resisting him. Be sure of it God will
 use you better then *Sathan* would, or then this
 world would, or better then you have used,
 or would use your selves. He will not em-
 ploy you in dishonourable drudgeries, and then
 dash you in pieces. He will not seduce you
 with swinish sensualities, and keep you in play
 with childish vanities, till you drop into dam-
 nation before you are aware: Nor will he
 lull you asleepe in presumptuous security, till
 you unexpectedly awake in unquenchable fire.
 You need not fear such dealing as this from
 him; *His Commandements are not grievous,*
1 John 5. 3. His Yoake is easie, his burthen
is light, and tendeth to the perfect rest of the
soul, Matth. 11. 28, 29, 30. What say you?
 will you hereafter be His? unfeignedly His?
 resolvedly, unreservedly, and constantly His?
 Or will you not? Take heed, *that you refuse*
not him that speaketh, Hebrews 12. 25. Reject
 not, neglect not this offer, lest you never
 have

have another on the like termes again: He is willing to pardon all that is past, and put up all the wrongs that you have done him, so you will but repent of them, and now at last be heartily and entirely his, not only in tongue, but in deed and life: Well, I have proclaimed Gods right to you, I have offered you his gracious acceptance: if yet you demur, or sleepily neglect it, or obstinately resist him, take that you get by it; remember you perish not without warning. The confession of Christs Right, which this day you have been forced to, shall remaine as on record, to the confusion of your faces; and you shall then be forced to remember, though you had rather forget it, what now you were forced to confess, though you had rather you could deny it. But I am loth to leave you to this Prognostick, or to part on terms so sad to your souls, and sad to me: I will add therefore some Reasons to perswade you to submit: and though it be not in my power to follow them so to your hearts as to make them effectual; yet I shall do my part in propounding them, and leave them to God to set them home, beseeching him that maketh, new-maketh, openeth, and softneth hearts at his pleasure, to do these blessed works on yours, and to perswade you within, while I am perswading you without, that

that I may not lose my labour and my hopes, nor you your souls, nor God his due.

1. Consider the fulness of Gods Right to you : no creature is capable of the like. He made you of nothing, and therefore you have nothing which is not his. He Redeemed you when you were fallen to worse then nothing: Had not Christ ransomed you by being a sacrifice for your sins, you had been hopelessly left to everlasting perdition : give him therefore his own which he hath so dearly bought, *1 Pet. i. 18.*

2. Consider that you have no right of propriety to your selves ; if you have, how came you by it ? Did you make your selves ? did you Redeem your selves ? do you maintain and preserve your selves ? If you are your own, tell God you will not be beholden to him for his preservation : Why cannot you preserve your selves in health, if you are your own ? Why cannot you recover your selves from sickness ? Is it your selves that gives power to your food to nourish you ? to the Earth to bear you, and furnish you with necessaries ? to the Air, to cool and recreate your spirits ? If you are your own, save your selves from sickness, and death ; keep back your age, deliver your souls from the wrath of God ; answer his pure justice for your own sins ; never plead the blood of a Redeemer, if you are your own.

If you can do these things, I will yield that you are your own. But no man can ransom his soul from death, it cost a dearer price then so, *Acts* 20. 28. You are not debtors therefore to the *flesh*, to live after it, *Rom.* 8. 12. but to *him that dyed*, to subdue the *flesh*, *Rom.* 6.

II.

3 None else can claim any Title to you, further then under God upon his gift. Men did not Create you or redeem you; *be not therefore servants of men*, *I Cor.* 7. 23. unless it be under Christ, and for him. Certainly *Sathan* did not create you, or redeem you; what right then hath he to you, that he should be served?

4. Seeing then that you are Gods, and his alone, is it not the most haynous theevery to rob him of his Right? If they must be hang'd that rob men of so small a thing as earthly necessaries, wherein they have but an improper derived propriety; what torments do those deserve that rob God of so precious a Creature, that cost him so dear, and might be so useful, and wherein he hath so full and unquestionable propriety? The greatest, the richest, the wisest men that are trusted with most, are the greatest Robbers on earth, if they live not to God, and shall have the greatest punishment.

5. Is it not incomparably more honourable

ble to be Gods, then to be your own? and to live to him, then to your selves; The object and end doth nobilitate the act, and thereby the Agent. It is more honourable to serve a Prince, then a Plowman. That man that least seeks his own honour or carnal interest, but most freely denyeth it, and most entirely seeks the honour of God, is the most highly honoured with God and good men, when self-seekers defraud themselves of their hopes. Most men thinkly vilely, or at least suspiciously of that man that seeks for honour to himself: they think if the matter were combustible, he need not to blow the fire so hard: if he were worthy of honour, his worth would attract it by a sweet magnetick power; so much industry they think is the most probable mark of indignity, and of some conscioufness of it in the Seekers breast. If he attain some of his ends, men are ready to look on his honour but as Almes, which he was fain to begge for before he got it: and could he make shift to ascend the Throne, so much in the eyes of the wisest men would be detracted from his honour, as they did believe himself to have a hand in contriving it. *Quod sequitur fugio, &c.* They honour him more that refuseth a Crown when it is offered, then him that ambitiously aspireth after it, or rapaciously

ciously apprehendeth it. If they see a man much desire their applause, they think he *needs* it. *Solomon* saith, *To search their own glory.* Pro. 25. 27.

6 You can never have a better Master than God, nor yet a sweeter employment than his service. There is nothing in him that may be the least discouragement to you, nor in his works that shall be distastefull. The reason why the world thinks otherwise, is because of the distempered averfness of their souls. A sick stomack is no fit Judge of the pleasantness of meats. To live to God, is to live to the truest and highest delights. His Kingdom is not in meats and drinks, but in Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. His servants indeed are often troubled; but ask them the reason, and they'l quickly tell you, that it is not for being his servants, or for serving him too much: but for fear lest they are not his servants, or for serving him no better. It is not in his waies, or at least not for them, that they meet with their perplexities, but in stepping out of them, and wandering in their own. Many besides the servants of God, do seek felicity and satisfaction to their minds, and some discover where it lyeth; but only they attain it and enjoy it.

But on the contrary, he hath an ill Master that is ruled by himself. A Master that is
blind

blind and proud, and passionate, that will lead you to precipices, and thence deject you ; that will most effectually ruine you, when he thinks he is doing you the greatest good : whose work is bad, and his wages no better ; that feedeth his servants in plenty but as swine, and in the day of famine denyeth them the husks ; what ever you may now imagine while you are distracted with sensuality, I dare say, if ever God bring you to your selves, you will consider that it is better be in your Fathers house where the poorest servant hath bread enough, then to be fed with dreams and pictures, and to perish with hunger ; Reject not God till you have found a better Master.

7. If you will needs be your own, and seek your selves, you disengage God from dealing with you as *His* in a gracious sence. If you will not trust him, nor venture your selves upon his promise and conduct, but still shift for your selves, then look to your selves as well as you can, save your selves in danger, cure your own diseases, quiet your own Consciences, grapple with death in your own strength, plead your own Cause in judgement, and save your selves from Hell if you can ; and when you have done, go and boast of your own sufficiency and atchivements, and tell men how little you are beholden to Christ. Woe to you, if
upon

upon these provocations, God should give you over to provide for your selves, and leave you without any other salvation then your own power is able to effect ; mark the connexion of this sin and punishment in *Dent.* 32. 18, 19, 20. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his Sons and of his Daughters ; And he said *I will hide my face from them : I will see what their end shall be :* As if he should say, I will see how well they can save themselves, and make them know by experience their own insufficiency.

8. Those men that seek themselves, and live to themselves, and not to God, are unfaithful and treacherous both to God and man. As they neglect God in prosperity, so they do but flatter him in adversity, *Psal.* 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. And he that will be false to God, whose interest to him is so absolute, is unlikely to be true to men, whose interest in him is infinitely less : He that can shake off the great obligations of Creation, Redemption, Preservation and provision, which God layeth on him, is unlikely be held by such slender obligations as he receives from men. I'll never trust that man far, if I know him, that's false to his Redeemer : He that will sell his God, his Saviour,

our, his soul and heaven for a little sensuality, vain-glory, or worldly wealth; I shall not wonder if he sell his best friend for a Groat: Self-seeking men will take you for their friend no longer then you can serve their turns; but if once you need them, or stand in their way, you shall find what they esteemed you for. He that is in haste to be rich, and thereupon respecteth persons, for a piece of bread that man will transgress, saith *Solomon, Prov. 28. 20, 21.*

9. *Sanctification* consisteth in your hearty resignation and living to God; and therefore you are un sanctified if you are destitute of this: *Without holiness none shall see God, Heb. 12. 14.* And what is holiness, but our sincere dedication and devotedness to God? being no longer common and unclean, but separated in resolution, affection and conversation from the world, and our carnal selves to him. It is the Office of the holy Ghost to work you to this; and if you resist and refuse it, you do not soundly believe in the Holy Ghost, but instead of believing in him you fight against him.

10. You are verbally devoted to Christ in solemn Covenant, entered into Baptism, and frequently renewed in the Lords Supper, and at other seasons. Did you not there solemnly by your parents, resign your self to Christ as his? and renounce the flesh, the world and the Devil,

vil, and promise to fight under Christ banner against them to your lives end: O happy person that performeth this Covenant; and everlastingly miserable are they that do not. *Fides non recepta, sed custodita vivificat, saith Cyprian.* It is not Covenant making, without Covenant keeping, that is like to save you. Do you stand to the Covenant that you made by your parents? or do you disclaim it? If you disclaim it, you renounce your part in Christ, and his benefits in that Covenant made over to you. If you stand to it, you must perform your promise, and live to God to whom you were resigned. To take Gods oath of Allegiance so solemnly, and afterward to turn to his Enemies which we renounced, is a rebellion that shall not be alwaies unrevenge-
ged.

II. Gods absolute Dominion and sovereignty over us, is the very foundation of all Religion, even of that little that is found left among Infidels and Pagans, much more evidently of the saving Religion of Christians: He that dare say he believeth not this, will never sure have the face to call himself a Christian. Is is not a matter of most sad consideration, that ever so many millions should think to be saved by a Doctrine which they believe not, or by a Religion that never went deeper

then the brain, and is openly contradicted by the tenour of their lives ! Is a true Religion enough to save you , if you be not true to that Religion ? How do men make shift to quiet their consciences in such gross hypocrisie ? Is there a man to be found in this Congregation, that will not confess that he is rightfully his Redeemer ? But hath he indeed their hearts, their time, their strength, and their interest ? follow some of them from morning to night, you shall not hear one serious word for Christ, nor see any serious endeavours for his interest. And yet these men will profess that they are his ; how sad a case is it, that mens own Confessions should condemn them, and that which they called their Religion, should judge them to that everlasting misery, which they thought it would have saved them from ! And how glorious would the Christian Religion appear , if men were true to it , if Christs Doctrine had its full impression on their hearts, and were expressed in their lives ! Is he not an excellent person that denyeth himself, and doth all for God ? that goeth on no business but Gods, that searcheth out Gods interest in every part of his calling and employment, and intendeth that , *that whether he eat or drink, or whatever he doth, doth all to the glory of God !* 1 Cor. 10. 31. that
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can say as *Paul*, *Gal. 2. 20.* *I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and Philip. 3. 7, 8.* *What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.* And *Phil. 1. 21.* *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Perhaps you think that the degree of these examples is unimitable by us : but I am sure all that will be saved, must imitate them in the *truth*.

12. Self-seeking is self-losing; and delivering up your selves and all you have to God, is the only way to save your selves, and to secure all. The more you are *His*, the more you are your own indeed ; and the more you deliver to him, and expend for him, the greater is your gain. These Paradoxes are familiar tryed truths to the true Believer ; these are his daily food and exercise, which seem to others such Scorpions as they dare not touch, or such stones as they are not able to digest. He knoweth that self-humbling is the true self-exalting; and self-exalting is the infallible way to be brought low. *Luke 14. 11. & 18. 14. Matth. 23 12.* He believeth that there is a losing of life which saves it, and a saving of it which certainly loseth it.

Mat. 10. 39. & 16. 25. O that I could reach the hearts of Self-seekers, that spend their care and time for their bodies, and live not unto God ! That I were but able to make them see the issue of their Course, and what it will profit them to win all the world, and lose their souls ! O all ye busie men of this world, hearken to the proclamation of him that bought you, Isa. 55. 1, 2, 3. Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ! buy wine and milk without money or price : wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread ? and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? hearken diligently to me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness ; incline your ear, and come unto me : hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you. O sirs, what a deal of care and labour do you lose ? how much more gainfully might your lives be improved ? Godliness with contentment, is the great gain, 1 Tim. 6. 6. That which you now think you make your own, will shortly prove to be least your own ; and that is most lost which you so carefully labour for : you that are now so idly busie in gathering together the Treasurie of an Ant-hillock, and building Childrens tottering piles, you forget that the foot of death is coming to spurn it all abroad, and tread down you and it together.

You

You spend the day of life and visitation, in painting your phantasies with the images of felicity, and in dressing your selves, and feathering your nest with that which you impiously steal from God; and you do forget, that the night of blackness is at hand; when God will undress you of your temporary contents, and deplume you of your borrowed bravery: how easily, how speedily, how certainly will he do it? Read over your case in *Luke* 12. from 16. to 22. How can you make shift to read such Texts, and not perceive that they speak to you? When you are a pulling down and building up and contriving what to do with your fruits, and saying to your selves, I have so much now as will serve me so many years, I will take mine ease, eat, drink and be merry; remember then the conclusion, [But God said unto him, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?*] So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.] Are these things *Yours* or *Mine*? saith God, whose are they? if they are yours, keep them now if you can: either stay with them, or take them with you. But God will make you know that they are his, and disrobe such men as thieves that are adorned with that which is none of their own; this honour saith

God, is mine, thou stolest it from me : this wealth is mine, this life, and all is mine. Only thy self he will not own : they shall require thy soul, that have conquered and ruled it ; though it was his by right of Creation and Redemption, yet seeing it was not his by a free Dedication, he will not own it as to everlasting salvation ; but say, *Depart from me, I know you not ye workers of iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23. O with what hearts then will self-seeking Gentlemen part with their honours and estates ! and the earthly-minded with their beloved possessions : when he that resigned all to God, and devoted himself and all to his service, shall find his consumed estate to be encreased, his neglected honour abundantly repaired, and in this life he shall receive an *hundred fold*, and in the world to come, *eternal life*, Matth. 10. 30. *John* 4. 56. *1 Tim.* 6. 12. 19.

13. Lastly consider, When Judgement comes, enquiry will be made, whether you have lived as your *own*, or as his that bought you : then he will require his own with improvement, *Luke* 19. 23. The great business of that day will be, not so much to search after particular sins, or duties, which were contrary to the scope of heart and life ; but to know whether you lived to God, or to your flesh ; whether your time, and care, and wealth, were expended

expended for Christ in his members and interest? or for your carnal selves. *Mat. 25.* In as much as you did it not to these, you did it not to him. You that Christ hath given Authority to, shall then be accomptable, whether you improved it to his advantage. You that he hath given honour to, must then give account, whether you improved it to his honour. In the fear of God, Sirs, cast up your accounts in time, and bethink you what answer will then stand good; it will be a doleful hearing to a guilty soul, when Christ shall say, I gave thee thirty or fourty years time: thy flesh had so much in eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and labouring, in idleness and vain talking, and recreations, and other vanities: but where was my part? how much was laid out for the promoting of my glory? I lent you so much of the wealth of the world; so much was spent on your backs, and so much on your bellies, so much on costly toyes, or superfluities, so much in revengeful suits and contentions, and so much was left for your posterity; but where was my part? how much was laid out to further the Gospel, and to relieve the souls or the bodies of your brethren? I gave thee a family, and committed them to thy care to govern them for me, and fit them for my service: but how didst thou perform it? O Brethren,

bethink you in time what answer to make to
 such Interrogatories; your Judge hath told
 you, that your doom must then pass according
 as you have improved your talents for him;
 and that he that hideth his Talent, though he
 give God his own, *shall be cast into utter dark-
 ness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth,*
 Mat. 25. 30. How easily will Christ then evince
 his right in you, and convince you that it was
 your duty to have lived unto him? Do you
 think sirs, that you shall then have the face to
 say, I thought Lord, that I had been made and
 redeemed for my self? I thought I had nothing
 to do on earth, but live in as much plenty as I
 could, and pleasure to my flesh, and serve thee
 on the by, that thou mightest continue my
 prosperity, and save me when I could keep the
 world no longer: I knew not that I was thine.
 and should have lived to thy glory. If any of
 you plead thus, what store of Arguments hath
 Christ to silence you? He will then convince
 you, that his Title to you was not questionable:
 he will prove that thou wast his by thy very
 Being, and fetch unanswerable Arguments
 from every part and faculty: He will prove it
 from his Incarnation, his life of humiliation,
 his bloody sweat, his crown of Thorns, his
 Cross, his Grave: He that had wounds to shew
 after his Resurrection, for the convincing of a
 doubting

doubting Disciple, will have such Scars to shew then, as shall suffice to convince a self-excusing Rebel: All these shall witness that he was thy rightful Lord: He will prove it also from the discoveries of his Word, from the warnings of his Ministers, from the mercies which thou receivedst from him, that thou wast not ignorant of his Right, and of thy duty ; or at least, not ignorant for want of means : He will prove it from thy Baptismal Covenant and renewed engagements : The Congregation can witness that you did promise to be his, and seale to it by the reception of both his Sacraments : And as he will easily prove his right ; so will he as easily prove that you denied it to him ; He will prove it from your Works, from the course of your life, from the stream of your thoughts, from your love, your desires, and the rest of the affections of your disclosed hearts.

O Brethren, what a day will that be, when Christ shall come in person with thousands of his Angels, to sit in judgement on the rebellious world, and claim his due which is now denied him ; when Plaintiff and Defendant, Witnesses, and Jurors, Councillors and Justices, Judges, and all the Princes on Earth, shall stand equal before the impartial Judge expecting

pecting to be sentenced to their unchangeable state ; then if a man should ask you, [what think you now, Sir, of living to God ? Is it better to be devoted to him, or to the flesh ? which now do you take for the better master ? what would you do now, if it were all to do again ?] what would you then say to such a Question ? how would you answer it ? would you make as light of it as now you do ? O sirs, you may hear these things now from your poor fellow-creature, as proud-hearted Gallants, or as self-conceited Deriders, or as besotted worldlings, or senseless blocks, or secret Infidels, that as those *Dent. 29, 19.* do bless themselves in their hearts, and say, *We shall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our hearts :* but then you will hear them as trembling prisoners ! Read the 20 *verse* at leisure. Such a sight will work, when words will not ; especially words not believed, nor considered of. When you shall see the God that you disowned, the Redeemer whom you neglected, the Glory which you forfeited, by preferring the pleasures of the flesh before it, the Saints triumphing whom you refused to imitate, and a doleful eternity of misery to be remedilessly endured, then Saints will seem wiser men in your eyes, and how gladly would you then be such ? but O too late ! what a thing is it, that men
 who

who say they belive such a judgement, and everlasting life and death, as all Christians profess to do, can yet read, and hear, and talk of such things as insensibly as if they were dreames or or fables! I know it is the nature of sin to deceive, and of a sinfull heart to be too willing of such deceiving; and its the business of Satan by deceiving to destroy, and with the most specious baits to angle for souls; and therefore I must expect, that those of you that are taken, and are neereſt to the pit, should be least fearful of the danger, and most confident to escape, though you are conscious that you live not to God, but to your selves: But for my part, I have read, and considered what God saith in his Word, and I have found such evidence of its certain truth, that I heartily wish, that I might rather live on a dunghill, and be the scorn of the world, and spend my few daies in beggery and calamity, then that I should stand before the Lord my Judge, in the case of that man whatever he be, that is not in heart and life devoted unto God, but liveth to his flesh: *for I know that if we live after the flesh, we shall dye,* Rom. 8. 13. I had rather lie here in *Lazarus* poverty, and want the compassion and relief of man, then to be cloathed with the best, and fare deliciously, and hereafter be denied

denyed a drop of water to cool the flames of the wrath of God.

I confesse, this is likely to seem but harsh and ungrateful preaching to many of you ; some pleasant Jingles, or witty sayings, or shreds of Reading, and pretty cadency of neat expressions, were liker to be accepted, and procure applause with them who had rather have their ears and phantasies tickled, then rubbed so roughly, and be roused from their ease and pleasing dreams. But shall I preach for my self, while I pretend to be preaching you from your selves to God ? Shall I seek my self, while I am preaching of the everlasting misery of Self-seekers ? God forbid. Sirs, I know the terrours of the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 11. I believe and therefore speak. Were I a Christian no deeper then the throat, I would fish for my self, and study more to please you, then to save you ; I love not to make a needless stir in mens Consciences, nor to trouble their peace by a Doctrine which I do not believe my self. But I believe that our Judge is even at the door, and that we shall shortly see him coming in his Glory, and the Host of Heaven attending him with acclamations ; In the mean time, your particular doom draws on ; the fashion of all these things passeth away ; as those seats will anon be empty when

when you are departed ; so it is but a moment till all your habitations shall change their possessors, and the places of your abode and too great delight shall know you no more. I must needs speak to you as to transient, itinerant mortals, who must ere long be carryed on mens shoulders to the dust, and there be left by those that must shortly follow you ; then farewell Honours and fleshly Delights, farewell all the accommodations and contents of this world ; O that you had sooner bid them farewell ; Had you lived to Christ as you did to them, he would not so have turn'd you off, nor have left your dislodged souls to utter desolation.

In a word, As sure as the word of God is true, if you *own* him not now as your Lord and Sovereign, he will not *own* you then as his chosen to salvation : and if now you *live* not *To him*, you shall not then *live With* him. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap : for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap everlasting life, Gal. 6. 7, 8. Consider this ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you, Psal. 50. 22.*

Beloved hearers, Believe as you pretend to
Believe,

Believe, and then live as you do Believe; If you believe that you are not your *own*, but his that made you, and bought you with a *Price*, and that he will thus try you for your lives, and everlasting comforts, on this Question, Whether you have lived to him, or to your selves? then live as men that *do indeed believe it*. Let your Religion be visible as well as audible; and let those that see your lives, and observe the scope of your endeavours, see that you *Be-lieve* it. But if you believe not these things, but are Infidels in your hearts, and think you shall feel neither pain nor pleasure when this life is ended, but that man dyeth as the beast, then I cannot wonder if you live as you believe. He that thinks he shall dye like a Dogg, is like enough to live like a Dogg, even in his filthiness, and in snarling for the bones of worldly vanities, which the Children do contemn.

Having spoken thus much by way of Exhortation, I shall add a few words for your more particular direction, that you may see to what my Exhortation doth tend, and it may not be lost.

1. Be sure that you look to the uprightness of your heart, in this great business of devoting your selves to God; especially see

1. That you discern and soundly believe
that

that excellency in God, which is not in the Creature : and that perfect felicity in his Love, and in the promised glory, which will easily pay for all your losses.

2. And that upon a deliberate comparing him with the pleasures of this world, you do resolutely renounce them, and dedicate your selves to him.

3. And specially that you search carefully lest any *Reserve* should lurk in your hearts, and you should not deliver up your selves to him absolutely for life and death, for better and worse, but should still retain some hopes of an earthly felicity, and not take the *unseen* felicity for your portion : *It is the lot of the wicked to have their portion in this life, Psal. 17. 14.* And let me here warn you of one delusion, by which many thousands have perished, and cheated themselves out of their everlasting hopes : they think that it is only some grosser disgracefull sins, as swearing, drunkenness, whoredom, injustice, &c. that will prove mens perdition ; and because they are not guilty of these, they are secure, when as it is the predominancy of the interest of the flesh, against the interest of God in their hearts and lives, that is the certain evidence of a state of Damnation, which way soever it be that this is expressed. Many a civil Gentleman hath his heart more addicted

to his worldly interest, and less to God, then some Whoremongers and Drunkards. If you live with good reputation for Civility, yea for extraordinary ingenuity, yea for religious zeal, and no disgracefull vice is perceived in your lives; yet if your hearts be on those things which you possess, and you love your present enjoyments better then God and the glory that he hath promised, your case is as dangerous as the Publicans and Harlots; you may spend your days in better reputation, but you will end them in as certain desolation as they. The Question is only, Whether God have your hearts and lives? and not, Whether you denyed them to him with a plausible Civility: nay it is meerly for their carnal selves, to preserve their reputation, that some men do forbear those grosser Crimes, when yet God hath as little of them as of the more visibly peophane.

Love not the world nor the things that are in the world; If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2. 15.

2. If you are wholly Gods, live wholly to him, at least do not stint him, and grudge him your service. It is grown the common Conceit of the World, that a life of Absolute Dedication to God, is more adoe then needs. What needs all this adoe, say they; cannot you be saved with less adoe then this! I will now demand

mand of these men but an Answer to these few sober Questions.

1. Do you fear giving more to God then his due ? Is not all his *own* ? And how can you give him more then all ?

2. He is not so backward in giving to you, that *owes* you nothing, but gives you plenty, variety and continuance of all the good you enjoy ; and do you think you well requite him ?

3. Christ said not of his life and precious blood, It is too much ; and will you say of your poor unprofitable Service , It is too much ?

4. Who will you give that to, which you spare from God ? that time, and study, and love and labour ? to any that hath more right to it or better deserves it, or will better reward you then he will do ?

5. Are you afraid of being losers by him ? have you cause for such fears ? is he unfaithful, or unable to perform his Promises ? will you repent when you come to heaven, that you did too much to get it ? will not that blessedness pay you to the full ?

6. What if you had no wages but your work ? is it not better to live to God then to man ? is not purity better then impurity ? If feasting be grievous, it is because you are sick ; if the

mire be your pleasure, it is because you are swine, and not because the condition is desirable.

7. Will it comfort you more in the reckoning and review, to have laid out your selves for God, or for the World? Will you then wish that you had done less for heaven, or for earth? Sirs, these Questions are easily answered, if you are but willing to consider them.

8. Doth it beseem those to be afraid of serving God too much, that are such bankrupts as we are, and are sure that we shall not give him the twentieth part of his due, if we do the best we can: and when the best that are scorned by the world for their forwardness, do abhor themselves for their backwardness! yea could we do all, *we are but unprofitable servants*, and should do but our duty, *Luk. 17. 10.* Alas, how little cause have we to fear lest we should give God too much of our hearts or of our lives?

3. If you are not your *own*, remember that nothing else is your *own*; what can be more your own than your selves?

1. Your Parts or Abilities of minde or body, are not your own; use them therefore for him that owneth them.

2. Your Authority and Dignities are not
your

your *own*; see therefore that you make the best of them for him that lent them you.

3. Your Children themselves are not your own; design them for the utmost of his service that trusts you with them; educate them in that way as they may be most serviceable to God. It is the great wickedness of too many of our Gentry, that they prepare their Posterity only to live plenteously and in credit in the world, but not to be serviceable to God or the Commonwealth. Design them all that are capable, to Magistracy or Ministry, or some usefull way of life: and whatever be their employment, endeavour to possess them with the fear of the Lord, that they may devote themselves to him. Think not the Preaching of the Gospel a work too low for the Sons of the Noblest person in the Land. It would be an excellent furtherance to the work of the Gospel, if Noblemen and Gentlemen would addict their Sons to the Ministry that are fit for it, and can be spared from the Magistracy; They might have more respect from their People, and easier rule them, and might better win them with bounty than poor men can do: They need not to contend with them for Tythes or maintenance.

4. If you are not your *own*, your whole Families are not your *own*: use them therefore

as Families that are dedicated to God.

5. If you are not your *own*, then your wealth is not your own : honour God therefore with your substance, and with the first fruits of your increase, *Prov.* 3. 9. Do you ask how ? Is there no poor people that want the faithful preaching of the Gospel for want of means or other furtherance ? Is there no godly Scholars that want means to maintain them at the Universities, to fit them for this Work ? Is there no poor Neighbours about you, that are ignorant, that if you buy them Bibles and Catechisms, and hire them to learn them, might come to knowledge and to life ? Are there no poor Children that you might set Apprentices to godly Masters, where soul and body might both have helps ? The poor you have alwaies with you. It is not for want of objects for your charity, if you hide your Talents or consume them on your selves; the time it coming when it would do you more good to have laid them out to your masters use then in pampering the flesh.

Some grudge that God should have the Tenths, that is, that they should be consecrated to the maintenance of his service : but little do these consider that *All* is *His*, and *All* must be accounted for. Some question whether now there be such a sin as sacrilege in being ; but little do they consider that every sin

is a kind of sacrilege. When you dedicated your self to God, you dedicated all you had ; and it was Gods before ; do not take it from him again : remember the halving of *Ananias*, and give God all.

Objection. But must we not provide for our Families ?

Answer. Yes, because God requires it, and in so doing you render it to him : that is given to him, which is expended in obedience to him, so be it you still prefer his most eminent interest.

Lastly, if you are not your *own*, then must not your Works be principally for your selves, but for him that *owneth* you. As the scope of your lives must be to the honor of your Lord, so be sure that you hourly renew these intentions; when you set your foot out of your doors ask whether your business you go upon be for God : when you go to your Rest, examine your selves what you have done that day for God; especially let no opportunity over-slip you wherein you may do him extraordinary service. You must so perform the very labours of your Callings, that they may be ultimately for God; so love your dearest friends and enjoyments, that it be God that is principally loved in them.

More particularly as to the business of the

Day, what need I say more then in a word to apply this general Doctrine to your special Work?

If the Honourable Judges, and the Justices will remember, that they are Gods, and not their own, what a Rule and Stay will it be to them for their Work? what an answer will it afford them against all solicitations from carnal self or importunate friends? *viz.* I am not mine own, nor came I hither to do mine own Work; I cannot therefore dispose of my self or it, but must do as he that *owns* me, doth command me: How would this also incite them to promote Christs interest with their utmost power, and faithfully to *own* the Causes which he *owneth*.

2. If all Councillors, and Solliciters of Causes did truly take themselves for Gods, and not their *own*, they durst not plead for, nor sollicit a Cause which they knew God disowneth: They would remember that what they do against the Innocent, or speak against a righteous Cause, is done and said against their Lord, from whom they may expect ere long to hear, In as much as you said, or did this against the least of these, you said, or did it against me. God is the great Patron of Innocency, and the pleader of every righteous Cause; and he that will be so bold as to plead against him, had

had need of a large Fee to save him harmless. Say not, it is your Calling which you must live by, unless you that once lifted your selves in your Baptism under Christ, will now take pay and make it your profession to fight against him : the emptier your purses are of Gain so gotten, the richer you are ; at least the fuller they are, you are so much the poorer. As we that are Ministers do find by experience, that it was not without provocation from us, that God of late hath let loose so many Hands, and Pens, and Tongues against us, though our Calling is more evidently owned by God, then any one in the world besides : so I doubt not but you may find upon due examination, that the late contempt which hath been cast upon your profession, is a reproof of your guilt from God who did permit it. Had Lawyers and Divines less lived to themselves, and more to God, we might have escaped, if not the scourge of reproachful Tongues, yet at least the lashes of Conscience. To deal freely with you, Gentlemen, it is a matter that they who are strangers to your profession, can scarce put any fair construction upon ; that the worst cause for a little money should find an Advocate among you ! This driveth the standers by upon this harsh Dilemma, to think that either your Understandings, or your Consciences, are very bad.

bad. If indeed you so little know a good cause from a bad, then it must needs tempt men to think you very unskilful in your profession. The seldom and smaller differences of Divines, in a more sublime and mysterious profession, is yet a discovery so far of their ignorance, and is imputed to their disgrace: but when almost every Cause, even the worst that comes to the Bar, shall have some of you for it, and some against it; and in the palpablest cases you are some on one side, and some on the other, this strange difference of your Judgements doth seem to bewray their weakness: but if you know the Causes to be bad which you Defend, and to be good which you oppose, it more evidently bewrayes a deplorable Conscience: I speak not of your innocent or excusable mistakes in Cases of great difficulty; nor yet of excusing a Cause bad in the main from unjust aggravations; but when Money will hire you to plead for injustice against your own knowledge, and to use your wits to defraud the Righteous, and spoil his Cause, or vex him with delays for the advantage of your unrighteous Clyent, I would not have your Conscience for all your gains, nor your Accompt to make for all the world; its sad that any known unrighteous Cause should have a professed Christian in the face of a Christian Judicature to defend it,

it, and *Sathan* should plead by the Tongues of men so deeply engaged to Christ: But its incomparably more sad, that almost every unjust Cause should find a Patron; and no contentious malicious person should be more ready to do wrong, then some Lawyers to defend him, for a (dear-bought) Fee! Did you honestly obey God, and speak not a word against your judgement, but leave every unjust man to defend his own Cause, what peace would it bring to your Consciences? what honour to your now reproached Profession? what relief to the oppressed? and what an excellent cure to the troublesome contentions of proud or malicious men?

3. To you Jurers and Witnesses I shall say but this, you also are not your own; and he that *owneth* you, hath told you, *That he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain*: Its much that into your hands the Law hath committed the Cause of the Just; should you betray it by perjury and false witness, while there is a Conscience in your guilty breast, and a God in Heaven, you shall not want a witness of your sin, or a revenger of the oppressed, if the blood of Christ on your sound repentance do not rescue you.

4. If Plaintiff and Defendant did well consider that they are not their own, they would
not

not be too prone to quarrels, but would lose their right, when God the chief Proprietor did require it. Why do you not rather take wrong and suffer your selves to be defrauded, then do wrong and defraud, and that your Brethren? 1 Cor. 6. 7, 8, 9.

To conclude, I earnestly intreat you all that have heard me this day, that when you come home, You will betake your selves to a sober consideration of the claim that God hath laid to you, and the Right he hath in you, and all that you have; and resolve without any further delay to give him his *own*, and give it not to his enemies, and yours. When you see the Judgement set, and the prisoners waiting to receive their sentence, remember with what unconceivable Glory and Terror your Judge will shortly come to demand his due; and what an enquiry must be made into the tenor of your lives. As you see the Ecclipsed Sun

*This Sermon was
preached in the time
of the Eclipse.*

withdraw its light, so remember how before this dreadful final Judgement, the Sun and Moon, and whole frame of Nature shall be dissolved! and how God will withdraw the light of his countenance from those that have neglected him in the day of their Visitation. As ever you would be *His* then, see that you be *His* now: *own* him as your absolute Lord, if
you

you expect he should own you then as his People. Woe to you that ever you were Born, if you put God then to restraint for his *Due*, and to take that up in your punishment, which you denyed to give him in voluntary obedience. You would all be *His* in the time of your extremity; then you cry to him as your God for deliverance. Hear him now if you would then be heard: live to him now, and live with him for ever. A Popish Priest can perswade multitudes of Men and Women, to renounce the very possession of worldly Goods, and the exercise of their outward Callings, in a mistaken devotedness to God. May not I then hope to prevail with you, to devote your selves with the fruit of your Callings, and Possessions to his unquestionable service? Will the Lord of mercy but fasten these perswasions upon your hearts, and Cause them to prevail; what a happy day will this prove to us all! God will have his *Own*, the Church will have your utmost help, the souls of those about you will have the fruit of your diligence and good examples, the Common wealth will have the fruit of your fidelity, the poor will have the benefit of your charity, I shall have the desired end of my labour, and your selves will have the great and everlasting gain.

A SERMON

Of the Absolute

Soveraignty of Christ;

And the necessity of mans
Subjection, dependance, and
chiefest love to him.

Preached before the Judges of
Assize at WORCESTER.

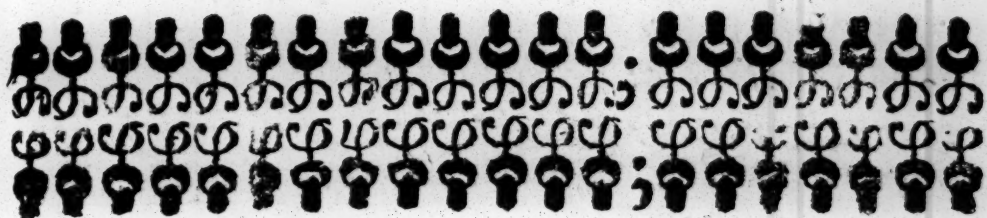
By RICH. BAXTER.

Luke 19.27.

*But those mine enemies which would not that
I should reign over them, bring hither and slay
them before me.*

LONDON

Printed for Nevill Simmons Bookseller in
Kedermister, 1658.



Christian Reader,

When I had resolved at the desire of the Honorable Judge of Assize, to publish the foregoing Sermon, I remembered that about six years before, I had preached another on the like occasion, on a subject so like, and to so like a purpose, that I conceived it not unfit to be annexed to the former. I have endeavoured to shew you in both these Sermons, that Christ may be preached without Antinomianism; that terrour may be preached without unwarrantable preaching the Law; that the Gospel is not a meer promise, and that the Law it self is not so terrible as it is to the rebellious. As also what that superstructure is, that is built on the foundation of General Redemption rightly understood; and how ill we can preach Christs Dominion in his universal propriety and sovereignty, or yet perswade men to sanctification and subjection without this foundation. I have laboured to fit all (or almost all) for Matter and Manner

To the Christian reader.

to the Capacity of the Vulgar. And though for the Matter it is as necessary to the greatest, yet is it for the Vulgar principally that I publish it; and had rather it might be numbered with those Books that are carryed up and down the Country from door to door in Pedlars Packs, then with those that lie in Book-sellers Stalls, or are set up in the Libraries of learned Divines. And to the same use would I design the most of my published labours, should God afford me time and ability, and contentions brethren would give me leave.

August the 7th.

1654.

Rich. Baxter.

A



A S E R M O N of the absolute Sovereignty of C H R I S T.

Pfal. 2. 10, 11, 12.

*Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings ; be instructed
ye Judges of the earth.*

*Serve the Lord with fear , and rejoyce with
trembling, &c.*



O waste this precious hour in an Invective against injustice and its associates, is none of my purpose ; they are sins so directly against the principles in Nature, so well known, I believe, to you all, and so commonly preached against upon these occasions, that upon the penalty of forfeiting the credit of my discretion, I am bound to make choice of a more necessary subject. What? have we need to spend our time and
Z studies

Studies to perswade Christians from Bribery, Perjury and Oppression? and from licking up the vomit which Pagans have cast out? and that in an age of blood and desolation, when God is taking the proudest Oppressors by the throat, and raising Monuments of Justice upon the ruines of the unjust! And I would fain believe that no corrupt Lawyers do attend your Judicatures, and that *Iezabels* witnesses dwell not in our Country, nor yet a Jurie that fear not an Oath: I have therefore chosen another subject, which being of the greatest moment, can never be unreasonable, even to proclaim him who is constituted the King and Judge of *All*, to acquaint you with his pleasure, and to demand your subjection.

The chief scope of the Psalm is, To foretell the extent and prevalency of the Kingdom of Christ, admonishing his enemies to submit to his Government, deriding the vanity of their opposing projects and furie, and forewarning them of their ruine if they come not in.

The verses which I have read are the Application of the foregoing prediction by a serious admonition to the proudest offenders: they contain, 1. The Persons admonished [*Kings and Judges*] 2. Their Duty. 1. In general to
God

God [Serve him] with the adjuncts annexed.

1. Rejoycing. 2. Fear and trembling. 2. More specially, their duty to the Son, [Kiss him.]

3. The Motives to this duty. 1. Principally and directly expressed [lest he be angry] which anger is set forth by the effect [and ye perish;] which perishing is aggravated,

1. From the suddenness and unexpectedness; [in the way.] 2. From the dreadfulnes

[kindled.] 1. It is fire, and will kindle and burn. 2. A little of it will produce this sad

effect. 3. It will be Woe to those that do not escape it; which Woe is set forth by the

contrary happiness of those that by submission do escape. 2. The motives subservient and im-

plied, are in the monitory words [be wise, be learned] q.d. else you will shew and prove your

selves men of ignorance and madness, unlearned and unwise.

Some Questions here we should answer for explication of the terms. As,

1. Whether the Lord in v. 11. and the Son in v. 12. be both meant of Christ the second person?

2. Whether the Anger here mentioned, be the anger of the Father or the Son [lest he be angry]

I might spend much time here to little purpose, in shewing you the different Judgement of Divines, of these, when in the issue there is no great difference which way ever we take them.

3. What is meant by [*Kissing the Son*]
I answer ; According to its threefold ob-
ject , it hath a threefold Duty contained in
it.

1. We kiss the feet in token of Subjection ;
so must we kiss the Son.

2. We kiss the hand in token of Depen-
dence ; so must we kiss the hand of Christ ; that
is, Resign our selves to him, and expect all our
happiness and receivings from him.

3. We kiss the mouth in token of love and
friendship ; and so also must we kiss the
Son.

4. What is meant by [*Perishing in the way*]
I answer, (omitting the variety of interpre-
tations) it is their sudden unexpected perishing
in the heat of their rage, and in pursuit of their
designs against the Kingdom of Christ.

I know no other terms of any great difficul-
ty here.

Many Observations might be hence raised :
As,

1. Serving the Lord is the great work and
business that the World hath to do.

2. This service should be accompanied
with rejoycing.

3. So should it also with fear and trem-
bling.

4. There

4. There is no such opposition between spiritual Joy and Fear, but that they may and must consist together.

5. Scripture useth familiar expressions concerning mans communion with Christ (such as this ; *Kiss the Son.*)

6. There is anger in God, or that which we cannot conceive better of then under the Notion of Anger.

7. There is a way to kindle this Anger ; it is man that kindleth it.

8. The way to kindle it chiefly, is, not kissing the Son.

9. The kindling of it will be the perishing of the sinner.

10. The Enemies of Christ shall perish suddenly and unexpectedly.

11. A little of Gods anger will utterly undo them.

12. They are blessed men that scape it, and miserable that must feel it.

13. It is therefore notorious folly to neglect Christ and stand out.

14. Kings, Judges, and Rulers of the earth, are the first men that Christs summons in, and the chief in the Calamity if they stand out.

But I will draw the scope of the Text into

this one Doctrine ; in the handling whereof, I shall spend the time allotted me.

Doct. No power or priviledge can save that man from the fearful sudden consuming wrath of God, that doth not unfeignedly love, depend upon, and subject himself unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

If they be the greatest Kings and Judges, yet if they do not kiss the Mouth, the Hand, the Feet of Christ, his wrath will be kindled, and they will perish in the way of their rebellion and neglect.

In handling this point I shall observe this Order.

1. I will shew you what this love, dependence and subjection are.
2. What wrath it is that will thus kindle and consume them.
3. Why this kissing the Son is the only way to escape it.
4. Why no Power or Priviledge else can procure their escape.
5. The Application.

For the first, I shall only give you a naked description, wishing that I had time for a fuller explication.

1. Subjection to Christ is, The acknowledging

ledging of his absolute sovereignty both as he is God Creator, and as Redeemer, over all the world, and particularly our selves ; and a hearty consent to this his Sovereignty, especially that he be our Lord, and his Laws our Rule, and a delivering up our selves to him to be governed accordingly.

2. This dependence on Christ is, when acknowledging the sufficiency of his satisfaction, and his power, and willingness to save all that receive him, manifested in his free universal offer in the Gospel, we do heartily accept him for our only Saviour, and accordingly (renouncing all other) do wait upon him believingly for the benefits of his sufferings and office, and the performance of his faithful Covenant to us, in restoring us to all the blessings which we lost, and advancing us to a far greater everlasting Glory.

3. This affection to Christ is, when in the knowledge and sense of his love to us, both common and especial, and of his own excellency, and the blessedness of enjoying him, and the Father, and life by him ; our hearts do choose him and the Father by him as our only happiness, and accordingly love him above all things in the world.

As this three-fold Description containeth the sum of the Gospel, so hath it nothing but

what is of necessity to sound Christianity. If any one of these three be not found in thy heart, either I have little skill in Divinity, or thou hast no true Christianity, nor canst be saved in that condition.

Object. But doth not the Scripture make believing the condition of the Covenant? but here is a great deal more then believing.

Answ. Sometime Faith is taken in a narrower sense, and then it is not made the sole condition of the New Covenant, but repentance and forgiving others, are joyned with it as conditions of our forgiveness; and obedience, and perseverance as conditions of our continued justification and salvation. But when Faith is made the sole condition of the Covenant, then it comprehendeth essentially (not only supposeth as precedent or concomitant) if not all three, yet at least the two first of the fore-described qualifications, *viz.* Dependence and Subjection; which if it were well understood, would much free the common sort of Christians from their soul-destroying mistakes, and the Body of Divinity from a multitude of common errors, and our Religion from much of that reproach of Solifidianism which is cast upon it by the Papists.

2. I must be as brief in opening the second thing, *viz.* What wrath is it that will thus kindle

kindle and consume them? What wrath is in God, we need not here trouble our selves to enquire; But only what is intimated in the threats or curses of the Covenants. As there are two Covenants, so each hath his proper penalty for its violation.

1. Then till men do come in and submit to Christ, they lie under the wrath of God for all their sins as they are against the Covenant of Works; or they are lyable to the curse of that Covenant. Christs death hath taken away the curse of the Covenant, nor absolutly from any man, but conditionally, which becomes absolute when the condition is performed. The Elect themselves are not by nature under the Covenant of Grace, but remain under the curse of the first Covenant, till they come in to Christ.

2. Whosoever rejecteth or neglecteth this Grace, and so finally breaketh the New Covenant, must also bear the curse or penalty thereof, besides all the former, which will be a far greater curse, even as the blessings of this Covenant are far greater then those of the first. It was a heavy punishment to be cast out of Paradise, and from the presence and favour of God, and to be cursed by him, and subjected to eternal death, and all Creatures below cursed for our sakes, to bear all those curses and
plagues

plagues threatned in *Deut.* 27. and 28. and to have the wrath of God smock against us, &c. as *Deut.* 29. 20. *But of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, that doth tread under foot the blood of this Covenant, and do despite to the spirit of Grace!* *Heb.* 10. 28, 29. It is true, that for all other sins, the wrath of God cometh upon the Children of Disobedience (or Unperswadableness) that is, on them that will not be perswaded to obey the Lord Christ, *Eph.* 5. 6. But it is on no other with us; for this is the condemnation, *that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light,* *John* 1. 19.

3. Why is this kissing the Son, (that is, loving, depending on, and submitting to him) the only way to escape these curses?

Ans. 1. The most proper and primary reason which can be given is, The will of the great Law-giver, who having absolute sovereignty over us, might dispose of us as he please, and make us such Laws and Conditions as seem best to his wisdom, upon which our justification and salvation should depend: He hath resolved that this shall be the only condition and way; and that as no man shall be justified by a meer Christ, or his death abstracted from Faith (that is of Age and use of Reason;) so this Faith shall be the condition upon which they

they shall be justified : or, as a Christ neglected shall save no man, so the accepting or receiving of him, shall justify and save them, as the condition of the Covenant performed, under which Notion it is that Faith justifieth.

2. Yet other improper or subordinate Reasons (which receive their life from the former, and without it would be no Reasons) may be given ; as 1. From the equity ; and 2. From the suitability and conveniency.

1. It is but equall that he who hath bought us, and that so dearly, and from a state so deplorable and desperate as we were in, should be acknowledged and accepted for our Saviour and our Lord ; and that we who are not our own, *but are bought with a price, should glorifie him with our bodies and souls which are his,* 1 Cor. 6.20. & 7.23. Especially when for that end he both *died* and *rose again*, that he might rule or be Lord over both *quick* and *dead*, Rom. 14.9. If one of you should buy a man from the Gallies or Gallows, with the price of your whole estate, or the life of your only Son: would you not expect that he should be at your dispose, that he should love you, depend on you, and be subject to you ?

2. And as salvation by free Grace through Christ is a way most suitable to Gods honor, and to our own necessities and low condition,

so

so in subordination thereto, the way of beleiving is most rationally conducible to the same ends. As we could not have had a fitter way to the Father then by Christ, so neither could there be a fitter way to Christ, or means to partake of him, then by Faith. For though I cannot call it the instrumental Cause of our justification, either Active or Passive; yet is this Faith or Acceptation of Christ, for our Saviour and King, which is here called [*Kissing the Son*] the fairest condition that we could reasonably expect, and the most apparently tending to the honor of our Redeemer; applying and appropriating to our selves the person, righteousness and benefits procured and offered, but not the least of the honor of the Work. All we do is but to accept what Christ hath procured, and that must be by the special assistance of his Spirit too.

4. The fourth thing I promised, is to shew you, Why no other Priviledge or Power in the world can save him that doth not kiss the Son. It may here suffice, that I have shewed you Gods determination to the contrary. But further consider (if any should hope to escape by their Dignities, Titles, Friends, Strength or any other endewments, or virtuous qualifications) 1. What, is their task? 2. What is their power to perform it?

1. They

1. They must resist the unresistible will of God ; They must do that which Heaven or Earth, Men or Devils were never able yet to do : They have resisted his Laws and his love ; but they could never resist his purpose or his power. The power that undertaketh to save the Enemy or Neglector of Christ, must first overcome the power of the Almighty, and conquer him that doth command the World: And who hath the strength that is sufficient for this ? Sinner, before thou venture thy soul upon such a mad conceit, or think to be saved whether God will or not, try first thy skill and strength in some inferiour attempt ; Bid the Sun or Moon stand still in the Firmament, invert the several seasons of the year ; Bid the snow and frost to come in Summer, and the flowers and fruits to spring in Winter : command the streams to turn their course, or the Tide its times or the winds their motion. If these will obey thee, and thy word can prevail with them against the Law of their Creator, then maist thou proceed with a greater confidence and courage, and have some hopes to save the neglecters of Christ : Or try first whether thou canst save thy present life against the course of nature and will of God ; call back thine age and years that are past, command thy pains and sickness to be gone ; chide back this
bold

bold approaching death : Will they not obey thee ? Canst thou do none of these ? How then canst thou expect the saving of thy soul against the determinate will and way of God ? Where dwelleth that man, or what was his name, that did neglect Christ, and yet escape damnation ? Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered ? *Job 9.4.* And dost thou think then to be the first ? Thou mayst perhaps knock boldly at the Gate of Heaven, and plead thy Greatness, thy virtues, thy Alms-deeds and formal devotion ; but thou shalt receive a sadder answer then thou dost expect : *Jesus* we know, and *obediential* Faith in him we know ; but who are ye ?

2. He that will save the soul that loveth not, dependeth not on, and subjecteth not himself to Christ, must first make false the word of God, and make the true and faithful God a lyar ; this is another part of his task ; God hath given it under his hand for truth, *That he that believeth not, is condemned already, Joh. 3.18. That he shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, Joh. 3. 36.* That they who are invired to Christ, and make light of it, or make excuses, *shall never taste of his Supper, Luke 14.24. Mat.22.5.8.* *That it shall be easier for Sodom in the day of Judgement, then for that City which refuseth the offers of the Gospel.*
Mat.

Mat. 12. 15. That whosoever would not have Christ to raign over them, *shall be brought forth at last, and destroyed before him as his enemies.*

Luk. 19. 27. *That they shall all be damned: that believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness,* 2 Thes. 2. 12. &c. And hath the Almighty said that thus it shall be? Who then is he that dare say it shall not be? Is this the concluded Decree of Heaven? what power or policy is able to reverse it? hath God said it, and will he not do it?

Thns you see his task, that will undertake to save one neglecter of Christ.

2. Let us now consider, what Power that is that must perform it: If it be done it must be either, 1. By Wisdom: or 2. By strength; whereas the chiefest of men, even the Kings and Judges of the Earth, are both ignorant and Impotent.

1. *Ignorant.* Though Judges are learned in the repute of the World: Alas, poor crawling breathing dust! Do you know the secrets of your Masters counsel? and are you able to over-reach them, and frustrate his designs? Doth this Book know what is written in it? Can the Seat you sit on, over-top your counsels? more likely then for you to over-top the Lord: silly worms, you know not what God is, nor know you any one of his unrevealed thoughts, no more then that Pillar doth know
your

your thoughts : you know not what you are your selves, nor see any further then the superficies of your skin ; what is thy soul ? and when didst thou receive it ? Dost thou know its form, or didst thou feel it enter ? which part didst thou feel it first possess ? Thou canst call it a Spirit, but knowst thou what a Spirit is ? or rather only what it is not ; Thou knowest not that whereby thou knowest ; and how was thy body formed in the womb ? what was it an hundred years agoe ? what is that vital heat and moisture ? what causeth that order and diversity of its parts ? when will the most expert Anatomists and Physitians be agreed ? Why, there are mysteries in the smallest worm which thou canst not reach ; nor couldst thou resolve the doubts arising about an Ant or Atome, much less about the Sun, or Fire, or Air, or Wind, &c. and canst thou not know thy self, nor the smallest part of thy self, nor the smallest Creature ? and yet canst thou over-reach the everlasting Counsels ?

2. And is thy might and power any greater then thy Policy ? Why, what are the Kings and Rulers of the Earth, but lumps of Clay, that can speake and go ? moving shadows, the Flowers of a day, a corruptible seed blown up to that swelled consistence in which it appears, as Children blow their bubbles of Soape, somewhat invisibly

visibly condensate ; which that it may become visible, is become more gross, and so more vile, and will shortly be almost all turned into invisible again ; and that little dust which corruption leaves by the force of fire, may be dissipated yet more ; and then where is the specious part of the man ? Surely now that body which is so much esteemed, is but a loathsome lump of corruptible flesh, covered with a smooth skin, and kept a little while from stinking by the presence of the soul, and must shortly be cast out of sight into a grave, as unfit for the sight or smell of the living, and there be consumed with rottenness and worms : these are the Kings and Rulers of the earth ; this is the power that must conquer Heaven, and save them that rebel against Christ the Lord : they that can not live a moneth without repairing their consuming bodies by food, one part whereof doth turn to their vital blood and spirits, and the other to most loathsome unsufferable excrements ; so neer is the kin between their Best and Worst. Judge all you that have common reason, whether he that cannot keep himself alive an hour, and shortly will not be able to stir a finger, to remove the worms that feed upon his heart, be able to resist the strength of Christ, and save the soul, that God hath said and sworn

shall not be saved ? Ah poor souls, that have no better Saviours ! And well may Christ, his Truth and Cause prevail, that have no stronger enemies.

Use 1. You have here a Text that will fully inform you how you are like to speed at the Bar of Christ ; who shall dye, and who shall live ; the great Assize is near at hand , the feet of our Judge are even at the door ; go thy way unbelieving sinner, when thou hast had all the pleasure that sin will afford thee, lye down in the dust and sleep a while, the rousing voice shall quickly awake thee, and thine eyes shall see that dreadful day ! O blessed ! oh doleful day ! blessed to the Saints, doleful to the wicked : O the rejoycing, O the lamenting that there will be ! the triumphant shoutings of joyful Saints ! the hideous roaring cries of the ungodly ! when each man hath newly received his Doom, and there is nothing but eternal Glory , and eternal fire. Beloved hearers, every man of you shall shortly there appear, and wait as the trembling prisoner at the Bar, to hear what Doom must pass upon you ; Do you not believe this ? I hope you do believe it. Why what would you give now to know for certain, how it shall then go with you ! why here is the Book by which you must be judged,

judged, and here is the sum of it in my Text, and the grounds upon which the Judge will then proceed. Will you but go along with me, and answer the Questions which hence I shall put to you, and search and Judge your selves by them as you go, and you may know what Doom you may then expect; only deal faithfully, and search throughly; for self-flattery will not prevent your sorrow.

And here you must know, that it is the kiss of the heart, and not of the lips, which we must here enquire after: the Question will not be at the Great Day, Who hath spoke Christ fair? or who have called themselves by the name of Christians? or who hath said the Creed or the Lords Prayer oftneft? or cryed, Lord, Lord? or come to Church, or carryed a Bible? or who hath held this opinion? or who that? It would make a mans heart ake to think how zealously men will honour the shadow of Christ, and bow at his Name, and reverence the Image of the Cross which he dyed on, and the names and reliques of the Saints that dyed for him; and yet do utterly neglect the Lord himself, and cannot endure to be governed by him, and resist his Spirit, and scorn his strict and holy waies, and despightfully hate them that most love and obey him, and yet

believe themselves to be real Christians. For Gods sake, Sirs, do not so delude your immortal souls, as to think your Baptism and your outward devotion, and your good meanings (as you call them) and your righteous dealing with men will serve the turn to prove you Christians: Alas, this is but with *Judas*, to kiss the mouth of Christ, and indeed to fetch your death from those blessed lips, from whence the Saints do fetch their life: I will shew you some surer signs then these.

I. And first let me a little enquire into your subjection to Christ. Do you remember the time when you were the servants of sin, and when *Sathan* led you captive at his will? and the Prince of darkness ruled in your souls? and all within you was in a carnal peace? Do you remember when the Spirit in the word came powerfully upon your hearts, and bound *Sathan*, and cast him out, and answered all your reasonings, and conquered all your carnal wisdom, and brought you from darkness to light, and from the power of *Sathan* unto God, *Acts* 26. 18. Or at least are you sure, that now you live not under the same Lord and Laws as the ungodly do? Hath Christ now the only sovereignty in your souls? Is his word thy Law which thou darest not pass? doth it bind thy thoughts,

thoughts, and rule thy tongue ? and command thy self and all thou hast ? Hast thou laid all down at the feet of Christ ? and resigned thy self and all to his will ? and devoted all to his dispose and service ? If custom bid thee curse and swear, and Christ forbid thee, which dost thou obey ? If thy Appetite bid thee take thy cups and fare deliciously every day ; if thy company bid thee play the good-fellow, or scorn the godly ; if thy covetousness bid thee love the world, and Christ forbid thee, which dost thou obey ? if Christ bid thee be Holy, and walk precisely, and be violent for heaven, and strive to enter in ; and the world and the flesh be enemies to all this, and cry it down as tedious folly, which dost thou obey ? Dost thou daily and spiritually worship him in private, and in thy Family, and teach thy Children and Servants to fear the Lord ? I intreat you Sirs, deal truly in answering these Questions. Never man was saved by the bare title of a Christian ; if you are not subject to Christ, you are not Christians, no more then a Picture or a Carcass is a man ; and your salvation will be such as your Christianity is : subjection is an essential part of thy Faith, and obedience is its fruit. In short then ; dost thou make him thy fear ? and tremble at his word ? Darest thou run upon

fire, or water, sword or canon, rather then wilfully run upon his displeasure ? wouldst thou rather displease thy dearest friend, the greatest Prince, or thine own flesh, then wittingly provoke him ? When Christ speaks against thy sweetest sin, thy nature or custom, or credit, or life, against thy rooted opinions, or thy corrupt traditions, art thou willing to submit to all that he revealeth ? Dost thou say, *Speak Lord, for thy Servant beareth ? Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do ? I am ready to do thy will, O God.*

Beloved Hearers, This is the frame of every Servant of Christ, and this is the acknowledging and accepting him for your Lord. I beseech you cozen not your souls with shews and formalities; if ever you be saved without this subjection, it must be without Christs merits or mercy: it must be in a way that Scripture revealeth not: nay, it must be in despite of God; his truth must be falsified; his power must be mastered before the disobedient can be saved from his wrath.

2. Examine also your Dependence on Christ, whether you kiss his Hands as well as his Feet. Do you understand that you are all by nature Condemned men, and lyable to the everlasting wrath of God ? that Christ hath interposed
and

and paid this Debt, and bought us as his own by the satisfaction of that justice; that all things are now delivered into his hands, *John* 13. 3. and he is made Head over all things to his Church, *Ephes.* 1. 21, 22. Dost thou take him for thy only Saviour? and believe the History of his Life and Passion, the truth of his divine and humane nature, his Resurrection, his Office, and his approaching Judgement? Dost thou see that all thy supposed Righteousness is but vanity and sin, and that thy self art unable to make the least satisfaction to the Law by thy Works or sufferings; and if his blood do not wash thee, and his righteousness justify thee, thou must certainly be damned yet, and perish for ever? Dost thou therefore cast thy self into his arms, and venture thy everlasting state upon him, and trust him with thy soul, and fetch all thy help and healing from him? When sin is remembered and thy Conscience troubled, and the fore-thoughts of Judgement do amaze thy soul, dost thou then fetch thy comfort from the view of his blood, and the thoughts of the Freeness and Fulness of his Satisfaction, his Love, and Gospel-offers and promises? Dost thou so build upon his promise of an Happiness hereafter, that thou canst let go all thy happiness

here, and drink of his Cup, and be baptized with his Baptism, and lose thy life upon his promise that thou shalt save it? Canst thou part with goods and friends, and all that thou hast, in hope of a promised Glory which thou never sawest? If thou canst drink with him of the Brook in the way, thou shalt also with him lift up the head. *Psal* 110. v. last. Dost thou perceive a Mediator as well as a God in all thy mercies, both special and common, and tast his blood in all that thou receivest, and wait upon his hand for thy future supplies? Why, this is kissing the hand of Christ, and depending upon him. O how contrary is the Case of the World! whose confidence is like the *Samaritans* worship: they trust God and their Wits and Labours; Christ and their supposed Merits; I would I might not say, Christ and deceit and wicked contrivances. Oh blasphemous joyning of heaven and hell to make up one foundation of their trust!

3. Examine a little also your love to Christ. Do you thus kiss the Son? do your souls cleave to him, and embrace him with the strongest of your affections? Sirs though there is nothing that the blind world is more confident in then this [that they love Christ with
all

all their hearts] yet is there nothing wherein they are more false and faulty : I beseech you therefore deal truly in answering here. Are your hearts set upon the Lord Jesus ? do you love him above all things in this World ? do you stick at your answer ? do you not know ? sure then at best you love him but little, or else you could not choose but know it. Love is a stirring and sensible Affection ; you know what it is to love a Friend : Feel by this Pulse, whether you live or dye : Doth it beat more strongly toward Christ then to any thing else ? Never question man, the necessity of this : he hath concluded , *If thou love any thing more then him, thou art unworthy of him, nor canst be his Disciple.* Are thy thoughts of Christ thy freest and thy sweetest thoughts ? are thy speeches of him thy sweetest speeches ? when thou awakest, art thou still with him, and is he next thy heart ? when thou walkest abroad, dost thou take him in thy thoughts ? canst thou say and lye not, that thou wert ever deeply in love with him, that thou dost love him but as heartily as thou lovest thy friend, and art as loth to displease him : and as glad of his presence, and art as much troubled at his strangeness or absence ? Hath thy minister or godly Acquaintance ever heard thee bemoaning thy
soul

soul for want of Christ, or inquiring what thou shouldst do to attain him : or thy Family heard thee commending his excellency, and labouring to kindle their affections towards him? why, love will not be hid; when it hath its desire, it will be rejoicing; and when it wants, it will be Complaining. Or at least, Can thy Conscience witness thy longings, thy groans, thy prayers for Christ? Wilt thou stand to the Testimony of these Witnesses? Do you love his weak, his poor despised Members? Do you visit them, cloath them, feed them to your power? not only in a common Natural Compassion to them as they are your Neighbors: but do you love or relieve a *Prophet* in the name of a *Prophet*, or a *Disciple* in the name of a *Disciple*? *Mat.* 10.40,41,42. shall all these decide the Question?

Beloved Hearers, I profess to you all in the Name of our Lord, that it is not your bold and confident affirming that you love Christ, which will serve your turn when Christ shall judge: he will search deep, and judge according to the truth in the inward parts. How many thousands will then perish as his utter Enemies, that verily thought themselves his friends? How easily now might they find their mistake, if they would but be at the pains to examine themselves?

themselves? Oh try, try, Sirs, before God try
 you; judge yourselves before Christ judge
 you. It would grieve a mans heart that knows
 what it is to love Christ, to believe, to be sub-
 ject to him, to see how rare these are in the
 world, and yet how confident and careless most
 men are! It may be that you may think much
 that I so question your love; yet Christ that
 knew all things, questioned *Peters* love to him,
 and that three times till it grieved *Peter*. I am
 a stranger to the most of you, and therefore
 know not your conditions or inclinations: yet
 judge me not censorious if I fear the worst, and
 if I measure you by the rest of the world; and
 then I may confidently and sadly conclude
 that Christ hath few loving Subjects among
 you. If we could hear your Oaths and vain
 speeches turned to heavenly soul-edifying dis-
 course, and your covetousness to conscionable-
 ness, and see that the word of Christ were your
 Law, and that you laid out your endeavors for
 heaven in good earnest, then we should say;
These People are the loving Subjects of Christ.
 But when men are enemies to Christs Doctrine,
 and ways and worship, and had rather live
 after the flesh, and the world, and the tradi-
 tions of their Fathers, and are notorious for
 profaness, superstition and enmity to Reforma-
 tion,

tion, who can chuse but condole your case ? and if your obstinacy will not endure us to help you, yet you shall give us leave whether you will or no, to lament you.

Use 2. But its time that I turn my speech to Exhortation : And oh that you would encourage me with your resolution to obey ! My business here to day is as his Herauld and Embassadour, to proclaim the Lord Jesus your King and Saviour ; and to know whether you will heartily acknowledge and take him so to be, or not : and to perswade you to take so fair an offer, while you may have it : and to kiss the Son, lest his wrath be kindled. This is my business here, in which if I had not some hope to speed, the Lord knows I would not have been here to day. You will say, This is a common Errand : do you think we never heard of Christ before ? I confess it is common, blessed be God for it (and long may it so continue and encrease, and let it be as constant and durable to us as the Sun in the Firmament : and the Lord grant that *Englands* sins or Enemies may never bereave them of the blessing of the Gospel ; and then it will be a happier Land then yet ever was on the face of the Earth) but is it as common to receive Christ in love and obedience?

I would it were. I know the name of Christ is common ; the Swearer doth swear by it : the Beggar begs by it, the Charmer put it into his charms, and the Jester into his jests, and every Papist and ignorant Protestant doth mutter it oft-times over his Prayers : But who trembleth at it ? or triumpheth in it ? who maketh it his Fear and his Joy ? and give up their souls and lives to be governed by Christ ? I do here solemnly proclaim to you, that the Lord Jesus will not be put off with your complements : he cares not for your meer name of Christianity, nor your Cap, nor your knee : If thy heart be not set upon him, thou art none of his : His word must be your Law, and you must depend on him alone for soul and body, or never look for mercy at his hands, He is the Author of eternal salvation to them (only) *that obey him*, Heb. 5.9.

What say you then, Sirs, in answer to my message ? and what course do you resolve upon ? shall Christ be your love, and your Lord, or not ? Will you kiss the Son, or will you sleight him still ; methinks you should easily be resolved, and say, Away with pleasure, and credit, and worldly gain ; away with these bewitching delights and companions. Christ hath bought my heart,

heart, and he shall have it it, he is my Lord, and I will be ruled by him. Hearers, I hope God hath kept you alive till now to shew you mercy, and brought some sinners hither to day to prevail with their hearts: And my hope is somewhat strengthened by Gods disposal of my own Spirit: I was strongly tempted to have preached this Sermon in the enticing words of humane wisdom, tending to a proud ostentation of parts: But Christ hath assisted me to conquer the temptation, and commanded me to preach him in plainness and evidence of the Spirit. I come not to perswade you to opinions or factions, to be for this side, or for that; but to be with all your hearts for Christ, as ever you look that Christ should be for you: to love him as he that hath bought you from eternal wrath, and dyed to save you from the everlasting burnings; to lay hold on him with most earnest affectionate apprehension, as a man that is ready to drown would do upon a bough, or upon the hand of his friend that would pull him to the shore: to wait for the Law of thy direction from him, and do nothing till thou hast asked counsel at his word, and knowst his mind, whether thou shouldst do it or no; till thou feel thy Conscience bound by his Law, that thou canst not stir till he give thee leave:
that

that the commands of parents and princes may stoop to his, much more the commands of custome and company, of credit or pleasure, of the world or flesh : These are the things that I exhort you to ; and I must tell you that Christ doth flatly expect them at your hands.

I will here back these Exhortations with some perswading Considerations. Think of what I say, and weigh it as we go. If I speak not truth and reason, then reject it with disdain and spare not : but if it be, and thy Conscience tell thee so, take heed then how thou dost neglect or reject it, lest thou be found a fighter against the Spirit, and lest the curse of God do seize upon that heart that would not yield to truth and reason.

And I will draw these Considerations only from my Text.

1. Thou art else a Rebel against thy Sovereign Lord. This I gather from the command in my Text, and indeed the Scope of the whole *Psalm*. God hath given thee into the hands of his Son, and made him Lord and King of all, and commanded all men to accept him, and submit unto him. Who can shew such title to the Sovereignty ? such right to rule thee as Christ can do ? He is thy maker and so is not Satan ;
he

he dearly bought thee, and so did not the world : *Thou wast not redeemed with silver and Gold, and corruptible things*, 1 Pet. i. 18. I make this challenge here in the behalf of Christ ; let any thing in the world step forth and shew a better title to thee, to thy heart, and to thy life, then Christ doth shew ; and let them take thy heart, and take thy rule. But why do I speak thus ? I know thou wilt confess it , and yet wilt thou not yield him thy chiefest love and obedience ? out of thy own mouth then art thou condemned and thou proclaimest thy self a knowing wilful Rebel.

2. To deny thy affections and subjection to Christ, is the most barbarous unkindness that a sinner can be guilty of. Did he pittie thee in thy lost estate, and take thee up when thou laist wounded in the way, and make thee a plaister of the blood of his heart ? And is this thy requital ? Did he come down from heaven to earth, to seek thee when thou wast lost, and take upon him all thy debt, and put himself into the prison of the world and flesh ? hath he paid for thy folly, and born that wrath of God which thou must have suffered for ever ? and doth he not now deserve to be entertained with most affectionate respect ? but with a few cold thoughts instead of hearty love, and with a
few

few formal words instead of worship? What hurt had it been to him if thou hadst perished? what would he have lost by it if thou hadst lain in Hell? would not Justice have been glorified upon a disobedient wretch? Might not he have said to his Father; What are these worms and sinners to me? must I smart for their folly? must I suffer when they have sinned? must I debase my self to become man, because they would have exalted themselves to become as God? If they will needs undo themselves, what is it to me? if they will cast themselves into the flames of Hell, must I go thither to fetch them out?—— Thus Christ might have put off the suffering and the shame, and let it fall and lie where it was due: but he did not; his compassion would not suffer him to see us suffer; Justice must be satisfied, the threat must be fulfilled; Christ seeth that we cannot overcome it, but he can, therefore he comes down into flesh, he lives on earth, he fasteth, he weepeth, he is weary, he is tempted, he hath not a place to put his head, he is hated, he is spit upon, he is cloathed as a fool, and made a scorn, he sweateth blood, he is Crucified with Thieves, he bears the burden that would have sunk all us to Hell, and must he after all this be neglected and forgotten? and his Laws that should rule

us, be laid aside and be accounted too strict and precise for us to live by ? O let the Heavens blush, and the Earth be ashamed at this barbarous ingratitude ! How can such a people shew their faces at his coming, or look him in the face when he shall Judge them for this ! would you use a friend thus ? No, nor an enemy. Me thinks you should rather wonder with your selves, that ever Christ should give you leave to love him, and say, Will the Lord endure such a wretch to kiss him ? will he suffer himself to be embraced by those arms which have been defiled so oft by the embracements of sin ? will he so highly honour me as to be his subject and his servant, and to be guided by such a blessed and perfect Law ? and doth he require no harder conditions then these for my salvation ? Take then my heart, Lord, it is only thine; and oh that it were better worth thy having ; or take it and make it better : the Spear hath opened me a passage to thy heart, let the Spirit open thee a passage into mine: deservedly may those Gates be fuel for Hell, that would not open to let in the King of Glory.

3. To deny thine affection and subjection to the Son, is the greatest folly and madness in the world. Why doth he require this so earnestly at thy hands ? is it for thy hurt, or for thy

thy good ? would he make a prey of thee for his own advantage ? is it for any need that he hath of thee, or of thy service, or because thou hast need of him for thy direction or salvation ? would he steal away thy heart as the world doth to delude it ? would he draw thee as Satan doth to serve him, that he may torment thee ? if so, it were no wonder that thou art so hardly drawn to him : but thou knowest sure that Christ hath none of these ends.

The truth is this : His dying on the Cross, is but part of the work that is necessary to thy Salvation ; this was but a paying of the debt ; he must give thee moreover a peculiar interest, and make that to be absolutely thine, which was thine but conditionally ; he must take off thy rags, and wash thy sores, and qualifie thy soul for the prepared Glory, and bring thee out of the prison of sin and death, and present thee to his Father blameless and undefiled, and estate thee in greater dignity then thou fellest from : and all this must he do drawing thee to himself, and laying himself upon thee as the Prophet upon the Child, and closing thy heart with his heart, and thy will with his will, and thy thoughts and waies with the Rule of his Word ; and is this against thee, or for thee ? is there any hurt to thee in all this ? I dare

challenge Earth and Hell, and all the Enemies of Christ in both, to shew the least hurt that ever he caused to the soul of a believer, or the least wrong to the soul of any.

And must he then have such a stir to do thee good? must he so beseech thee to be happy, and follow thee with entreaties? and yet art thou like a stock that neither hears nor feels? Nay, dost thou not murmur and strive against him, as if he were about to do thee a mischief, and would rather cut thy throat then cure thee, and were going to destroy thee, and not to save thee? I appeal to any that hath not renounced his Reason, whether this be not notorious brutish unreasonableness; and whether thou be not liker a beast, that must be cast or held while you dress his sores, then to a man that should help on his own recovery? Foolish Sinner! it is thy sin that hurts thee, and not thy Saviour: why dost thou not rather strive against that? It is the Devil that would destroy thee, and yet thou dost not grudge at thy obedience to him. Be Judge thy self, whether this be wise or equal dealing.

Sinner, I beseech thee in the behalf of thy poor soul, if thou have such a mind to renounce thy Saviour, do it not till thou hast found a better Master; say as Peter, *Whither shall we go? Lord*
thou

thou hast the words of eternal life : and when
 thou knowest once where to be better, then go
 thy way, part with Christ and spare not: if thy
 merry company, or thy honour, or thy wealth,
 or all thy friends and delights in the world will
 do that for thee which Christ hath done, and
 which at last he will do if thou stick to him,
 then take them for thy Gods, and let Christ go.
 In the mean time let me prevail with thee,
 as thou art a man of reason, sell not thy Saviour
 till thou know for what, sell not thy soul till
 thou know why, sell not thy hopes of Heaven
 for nothing. God forbid that thy wilful folly
 should bring thee to Hell, and there thou
 shouldst lie roaring and crying out for ever,
 This is the reward of my neglecting Christ, he
 would have led me to Glory, and I would not
 follow him, I sold heaven for a few merry hours,
 for a little honour, and ease, and delight to my
 flesh : here I lie in torment, because I would
 not be ruled by Christ, but chose my lusts and
 pleasure before him. ——— Sinner, do not
 think I speak harshly or uncharitably to call
 this neglect of Christ thy folly : as true as thou
 livest and hearest me this day, except thy timely
 submission do prevent it (which God grant it
 may) thou wilt one of these daies befool thy
 self a thousand times more then I now befool

thee, and call thy self mad, and a thousand times mad, when thou thinkest how fair thou wast for heaven, and how ready Christ was to have been thy Saviour and thy Lord, and how light thou madest of all his offers: either this will prove true to thy cost, or else am I a false Prophet, and a cursed deceiver. Be wise therefore, be learned, and kiss the Son.

The former Considerations were drawn from Aggravations of the sin; the following are drawn from the Aggravations of the punishment, and that from the words of the Text too.

1. *God will be angry if you kiss not the Son.* His wrath is as fire, and this neglect of Christ is the way to kindle it. If thou art not a Believer, thou art condemned already: but this will bring upon thee a double condemnation. Believe it for a truth, All thy sins as they are the Covenant of Works, even the most hainous of them, are not so provoking and destroying as thy flighting of Christ. Oh what will the Father say to such an unworthy wretch! Must I send my Son from my bosome to suffer for thee? must he groan when thou shouldest groan? and bleed when thou shouldst bleed, and dye when thou shouldst dye? And canst thou not now be persuaded to embrace him and obey him? must the world

world be courted while he stands by ? must he have the naked title of thy Lord and Saviour, while thy fleshly pleasures and profits have thy heart ? what wrath can be too great, what hell too hot, for such an ungrateful, unworthy wretch ! Must I prepare thee a portion of the blood of my Son, and wilt not thou be perswaded now to drink it ? must I be at so much cost to save thee, and wilt thou not obey that thou maist be saved ? Go seize upon him justice, let my wrath consume thee, let hell devour thee, let thy own Conscience for ever torment thee: seeing thou hast chosen death, thou shalt have it ; and as thou hast rejected Heaven, thou shalt never see it, *but my wrath shall abide upon thee for ever Joh. 3. 36.* — Woe to thee sinner if this be once thy sentence ! thou wert better have all the world angry with thee, and bound in an oath against thee, as the Jews against *Paul*, then that one drop of his anger should light upon thee: thou wert better have Heaven and Earth to fall upon thee, then one degree of Gods displeasure.

2. As this wrath is Fire, so is it a consuming Fire, and causeth the sinner utterly to perish. All this is plain in the Text : not that the Being of the soul will cease : such a perishing the sinner would be glad of : a happy man would

he think himself, if he might dye as the
 bruits and be no more; but such wishes are vain.
 It is but a glimpse of his own condition,
 which he shall see in the great combustion
 of the world; when he seeth the heaven and
 earth on fire, he sees but the picture of his ap-
 proaching wo. But alas, it is he that must feel
 the devouring fire. The world will be but
 refined or consumed by its fire; but there
 must he burn, and burn for ever, and yet be
 neither consumed nor refined. The Earth will
 not feel the flames that burn it, but his soul
 and body must feel it with a witness; little
 know his friends that are honourably inter-
 ring his Corps, what his miserable soul is see-
 ing and feeling; here endeth the story of his
 prosperity and delights, and now begins the
 Tragedy that will never have end; Oh
 how his merry daies are vanished as a dream!
 and his Jovial life as a Tale that is told!
 His witty jests, his pleasant sports, his Cards
 and Dice, his merry company and wanton
 dalliance, his Cups and Queans, yea his
 hopes of heaven and confident conceits of esca-
 ping this wrath, are all perished with him in the
 way; as the wax melteth before the fire, as the
 chaff is scattered before the wind, as the stub-
 ble consumeth before the flames, as the flowers
 do

do whither before the scorching Sun ; so are all his sinful pleasures withered, consumed, scattered and melted. And is not the hearty embracing of Christ and subjection to him, a cheap prevention of all this ? Oh who among you can dwell with the devouring fire ? *Who can dwell with the everlasting burnings ?* Isa. 33.

14. This God hath said he will surely do ; if you are able to gain-say and resist him, try your strength ; read his challenge, *Isai. 27. 4. Who would set the briars and thorns against me in bat-tel ? I would go through them, I would burn them together.*

3. This perishing will be sudden and unexpected, in the way of their sin and resistance of Christ, in the way of their fleshly delights and hopes ; *They shall perish in the way,* 1 Thes. 5. 3. Mat. 24. 37. As fire doth utterly break out in the night when men are sleeping, and consumeth the fruit of their long labours ; so will this fire break forth upon their souls : and how neer may it be when you little think on it ? A hundred to one but some of us present, shall within a few months be in another world ; and what world will it be, you may easily conceive, if you do not embrace and obey the Son. How many have been smitten with *Herod* in the midst of their vain-glory ? How many like *Ahab* have

have been wounded in fight, and dunged the Earth with their flesh and blood, who left the Lords people to be fed with bread and water of affliction in confidence of their own return in peace? How many have been swallowed up like *Pharaoh* and his Host in their rash and malicious pursuit of the godly? little thinks many an ignorant careless soul, what a change of his condition he shall shortly find; Those thousands of souls that are now in misery, did as little think of that doleful state while they were merrily pleasing the flesh on earth, and forgetting Christ and their eternal state, as you do now; they could as contemptuously jeer the Preacher as you, and verily believe that all this talk was but words and wind, and empty threats, and ventured their souls as boldly upon their carnal hopes: Little thought *Sodom* of the devouring fire, when they were furiously assaulting the door of their righteous reprov-er: As little do the raging enemies of godliness among us, think of the deplorable state which they are hastening to! They will cry out themselves then, Little did I think to see this day, or feel these torments! — Why, thou wouldst not think of it, or else thou mightest: God told thee in Scripture, and Ministers in their preaching, but thou wouldst not believe till it was too late.

A *little* of Gods wrath will bring down all this upon those that embrace not and obey not the Son. If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, &c. As his mercy being the mercy of an infinite God, a little of it will sweeten a world of crosses; so therefore will a little of his wrath consume a world of pleasures; one spark fell among the *Bethshemites*, and consumed fifty thousand and seventy men, but for looking into the Ark, till the people cry out, *Who can stand before this holy Lord God?* 1 Sam, 6. 19, 20. How then will the neglecters of Christ stand before him? Sirs, me thinks we should not hear of this as strangers or unbelievers! There did but one spark fall upon *England*, and what a cumbustion hath it cast this Kingdom into? how many Houses and Towns hath it consumed? How many thousand of people hath it impoverished? how many children hath it left fatherless? and how many thousand bodies hath it bereaved of their souls? And though there are as many hearty prayers, and tears poured forth to quench it, as most Kingdoms on earth have had; yet is the fire kindled afresh, and threatneth a more terrible desolation then before, as if it would turn us all to ashes. One spark fell upon *Germany*, another upon *Ireland*, and what it hath done there, I need

need not tell you. If a little of this wrath do but seize upon the body, what cries and groans and lamentations doth it raise? If it be on one member, yea but a tooth, how dost thou roar with intolerable pain, and wouldst not take the world to live for ever in that condition? If it seize upon thy Conscience, what torments doth it cause, as if the man were already in the suburbs of Hell. He thinketh every thing he seeth is against him; he feareth every bit he eateth should be his bane: If he sleep, he dreams of death and Judgement; when he awaketh, his Conscience and horror awake with him: he is weary of living, and fearful of dying; even the thoughts of heaven are terrible to him, because he thinks it is not for him. Oh what a pitiful sight is it to see a man under the wrath of God! And are these little sparks so intolerable hot? What then do you think are the everlasting flames? Beloved Hearers, if God had not spoke this, I durst not have spoke it: The desire of my soul is that you may never feel it, or else I should never have chosen so unpleasing a subject, but that I hope the fore-knowing may help you to prevent it; But let me tell you from God, that as sure as the heaven is over your head, and the earth under your feet, except the Son of God be nearer thy

thy heart, and dearer to thy heart then friends or goods, or pleasures, or life, or any thing in this world, this burning wrath will never be prevented. *Mat. 10. 37. Luke 14. 26.*

5. When this wrath of God is thoroughly kindled, the world will discern the blessed from the wretched, *Then blessed are they that trust in him.* It is the property of the wicked to be wise too late; Those that now they esteem but precise fools, will then be acknowledged blessed men; Bear with their scorns Christians in the mean time; they will very shortly wish themselves in your stead, and would give all that ever they were masters of, that they had fought and loved Christ as earnestly as you, and had a little of your oyl when they find their lamps are out, *Mat. 25. 8.*

And now Hearers what is your resolution? perhaps you have been enemies to Christ under the name of Christians; Will you be so still? Have you not loathed this busie diligent serving of him? and hated them that most carefully seek him, more then the vilest drunkard or blasphemers? Have not his word and service and sabbaths been a burthen to you? Have not multitudes ventured their lives against his Ordinances and Government? Nay
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is it not almost the common voice of the Nation in effect, *Give us our sports and liberty of sinning, give us our Readers, and singing-men, and drunken Preachers, give us our Holy-daies and Ceremonies, and the Customes of our fore-fathers; Away with these precise fellows, they are an eye-sore to us; these precise Preachers shall not controll us, this precise Scripture shall be no Law to us, and consequently this Christ shall not Rule over us.*

How long hath *England* rebelled against his Government ! Mr *Udal* told them in the days of Queen *Elisabeth*, that if they would not set up the Discipline of Christ in the Church, Christ would set it up himself in a way that would make their hearts to ake. I think their hearts have ake by this time: and as they judged him to the Gallows for his Prediction, so hath Christ executed them by thousands for their Rebellion against him; and yet they are as unwilling of his Government as ever. The Kings of the Earth are afraid lest Christs Government should un-king them. The Rulers are jealous lest it will depose them from their Dignities; even the Reformers that have adventured all to set it up, are jealous lest it will incroach upon their power and priviledges. Kings are afraid of it, and think themselves but
half

half Kings, where Christ doth set up his Word and Discipline. Parliaments are afraid of it, lest it should usurp their Authority. Lawyers are afraid of it, lest it should take away their gains, and the Laws of Christ should over-top the Laws of the Land. The people are afraid of it, lest it will compel them to subjection to that Law and way which their souls abhor : Indeed if men may be their own judges, then Christ hath no enemies in *England* at all ; we are his friends, and all good Christians : It is Precisians and Rebels that men hate, and not Christ ; It is not the Government of Christ that we are afraid of, but the domineering of aspiring ambitious *Presbyters* (*viz.* That Generation of godly, learned, humble Ministers, who have done more then any before them, to make themselves incapable of preferment or domineering) and when men disobey and disregard our doctrine, it is not Christ, but the Preacher that they despise and disobey. And if the Jews might so have been their own Judges, it was not the Son of God whom they crucified, but an enemy to *Cesar*, and a blasphemers that works by the Devil. It was not *Paul* a Saint that they persecuted, but one that they found to be a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition amongst the people. But were there no seditions

tious persons but Apostles and Christians? nor no troublers of *Israel*, but *Elias*? nor no enemies to *Cesar*, but Christ and his friends? Oh, God will shortly take off the vail of hypocrisy from the actions of the world, and make them confess that it was Christ they resisted, and that it was his holy waies and word that did kindle their fury; else would they as soon have fallen upon the ungodly rabble, as they did upon the most zealous and conscionable Christians; And however you mangle and deform them with your false accusations and reproach, he will then know and own his people and his Cause, and will say to the world, *In despising them you despised me; and in as much as you did it to one of these little ones, you did unto me.* As Dr Stoughton saith, *If you strike a Schismatick, and God find a Saint lie a bleeding, and you to answer it; I would not be in your coat for more then you got by it.* Hath the world ever gained by resisting Christ? Doth it make the Crown sit faster on the heads of Kings? or must they not rather do to Christ, as King *John* to his supposed Vicar, resign their Crowns to him, and take them from him again as his Tributaries, before they can hold them by a certain tenure? read over but this Psalm and Judge. *Herod* must kill the child *Iesus* to secure his Crown;

Crown: The *Jews* must kill him lest the *Romans* should come and take away their place and Nation, *Joh. 11. 48.* And did this means secure them? or did it bring upon them the destruction which they thought to avoid?

Or have the people been greater gainers by this, then their Kings? What hath *England* got by resisting his Gospel and Government, by hating his servants, and by scorning his holy waies? What have you got by it in this City? what say you? have you yet done with your enmity and resistance? have you enough, or would you yet have more? If you have not done with Christ, he hath not done with you; you may try again, and follow on as far as *Pharaoh* if you will; but if you be not losers in the latter end, I have lost my judgement; and if you return in peace, God hath not spoken by me, (*1 King. 22. 28.*)

Sirs, I am loth to leave you till the bargain be made: What say you? Do you heartily consent that Christ shall be your sovereign; his Word, your Law; his people, your Companions; his worship, your recreation; his merits your refuge: his glory, your end, and himself the desire and delight of your souls? The Lord Jesus now waiteth upon you for your resolution and answer: thou wilt very shortly

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wait

wait on him for thy Doom: as ever thou wouldst then have him speak life to thy soul, do thou now resolve upon the way of life. Remember thou art almost at death and judgement: what wouldst thou resolve if thou knewest that it were to morrow? If thou didst but see what others do now suffer for neglecting him that doth now offer thee his grace; what wouldst thou then resolve to do? Sirs, it stirreth my heart to look upon you (as *Xerxes* upon his Army) and to think that it is not an hundred years till every soul of you shall be in Heaven or in Hell; and it may be not an 100 hours till some of your souls must take their leave of your bodies; when it comes to that, then you will cry, Away with the world, away with my pleasures; nothing can comfort me now but Christ; why then will you not be of the same mind now? When the world cries, Away with this holiness, and praying, and talking of heaven! give us our sports, and our profits and the customes of our fore-fathers, *i. e.* away with Christ, and give us *Barabbas*: then doe you cry, Away with all these, and give us Christ.

Oh, if it might stand with the will of God, that I might choose what effect this Sermon should have upon your hearts; verily it should be

be nothing that should hurt you in the least; but this it should be, it should now fasten upon your souls, and pierce into your Consciences, as an Arrow that is drawn out of the quiver of God; it should follow thee home to thy house, and bring thee down on thy knees in secret, and make thee there lament thy case, and cry out in bitterness of thy spirit, Lord, I am the sinner that have neglected thee, I have tasted more sweetness in the world than in thy blood, and taken more pleasure in my earthly labours and delights, than I have done in praying to thee, or meditating on thee: I have complemented with thee by a cold profession; but my heart was never set upon thee: — And here should it make thee lie in tears and prayers; and follow Christ with cries and complaints, till he should take thee up from the dust, and assure thee of his pardon, and change thy heart, and close it with his own. If thou wert the dearest friend that I have in the world, this is the success that I would wish this Sermon with thy soul; that it might be as a voice still sounding in thine ears, that when thou art next in thy sinful company or delights, thou mightest as it were, hear this voice in thy Conscience, *Is this thine obedience to him that bought thee?* that when thou art next forgetting Christ, and neglecting

his worship in secret, or in thy family, or publique, thou mightest see this sentence, as it were written upon thy wall, *Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and thou perish* : that thou mightest see it, as it were written upon the Tester of thy Bed, as oft as thou liest down in an unregenerate state : and that it may keep thine eyes waking, and thy soul disquieted, and give thee no rest, till thou hast rest in Christ. In a word, If it were but as much in my hands as it is in yours, what should become of this Sermon, I hope it would be the best Sermon to thee that ever thou heardest : it should lay thee at the feet of Christ, and leave thee in his arms : Oh that I did but know what Arguments would perswade you, and what words would work thy heart hereto. If I were sure it would prevail, I would come down from the Pulpit, and go from man to man upon my knees with this request and advice in my Text : *O kiss the Son lest he be angry and you perish.*

But if thy hardened heart make light of all, and thou go on still in thy careless neglect of Christ, and yet wilt not believe but thou art his friend and servant, I do here from the Word, and in the name of Christ, pass this sentence upon thy soul : Thou shalt go hence, and perhaps linger out in thy security a few dayes more, and then

then be called by death to judgement, where thou shalt be doomed to this everlasting fiery wrath. Make as light of it as thou wilt, feel it thou shalt, put it off and scape it if thou canst : and when thou hast done, go boast that thou hast conquered Christ : In the meantime, I require this Congregation to bear witness, that thou hadst warning.

This to all in general : My Text yet directeth me to speak more particularly to the Rulers and Judges of the Earth.

Honourable and Reverend Judges, worshipful Magistrates, if you were all Kings and Emperors, all is one to Christ : you were but high and mighty dust and ashes : Christ sendeth his Summons first to you : he knows the Leaders Interest in the Vulgar : you are the Commanders in the Host of God and must do him more service then the common-Soldiers. If one of you should neglect him, and stand out against him, he will begin with you in the fight of the rest, and make your greatness a stepping stone to the honour of his justice, that the lowest may understand what they have to do, when they see the greatest cannot save themselves.

Shall I say you are wiser then the People, and therefore that this Admonition is needless

to you ? No, then I should accuse the Spirit in my Text : The Cedars of the Earth have alwaies hardly stoopt to Christ, which hath made so many of them rooted up. Your honours are an impediment to that self abasing which he expecteth ; your Dignities will more tend to blind you, then to illuminate ; there's few of any sort, but fewest of the great & wise, and mighty that are called : yet a man would think, that among those that have held out in these trying times, there should be no need of these suspicions : but hath there not been alwaies a succession of sinners, even of those that have beheld the ruines of their Predecessors ? Who would have thought that a generation that had seen the Wonders in *Egypt*, and had passed through the Sea, and been maintained in a Wilderness with constant Miracles, should yet be such vile Idolaters, or murmuring unbelievers, that only two of them should enter into Rest ? The best of Saints have need of self-suspicion and vigilancy ; my advice therefore to you is this, Learn wisdom by the Examples that your eyes have seen ; *Them that honour God, he will honour : and they that despise him, shall be lightly esteemed,* 1 Sam. 2. 30. more particularly, let me advise you, as your Duty to the Son, 1. That you take your commission

mission and office as from him. I think it a doctrine more common then true, that Ministers only are under Christ the Mediator, and Magistrates are only under God as Creator. Christ is now Lord of All, and you are his Servants : As there is no power but from God, so none from God but by Christ. Look upon yourselves as his Vicegerents : therefore do not that which becometh not a Vicegerent of Christ. Remember, that as you see to the execution of the Laws of the Land, so will Christ see that his Laws be obeyed by you, or executed on you. Remember when you sit and Judge offenders, that you represent him that will judge you and all the world : and oh how lively a resemblance have you to raise your apprehension ! Think with your selves, Thus shall men tremble before his Bar ; thus shall they wait to hear their doom ; and be sure that your Judgement be such as may most lively represent the Judgement of Christ, that the Just may depart from your Bar with joy, and the unjust with sadness. Let your Justice be most severe, where Christ is more severe ; and so far as you can exercise your clemency, let it be about those offences which our Laws are more rigorous against then the Laws of God. Be sure yet that you understand the extent of your

commission ; that you are not the sole officers
 of Jesus Christ ; you are under him as he is
 head over All ; Ministers are under him as he is
 head to his Church , *Eph. 1. 22.* Ministers
 are as truly the Magistrates Teachers, as Ma-
 gistrates are their Governors ; yea, by as high
 and undoubted authority must they over-see,
 govern, and command (ministerially as their
 Lords Embassadors) both Kings and Parlia-
 ments, to do whatsoever is written in this Bi-
 ble, as you may command them to obey the
 laws of the Land ; yea and as strict a bond lieth
 on you to obey them so far as they speak accor-
 ding to this word, and keep within the bounds
 of their Calling, as doth on them to obey you
 in yours, *Heb. 13. 7, 17.* Deal not with them
 so dissemblingly, as to call them your Pastors,
 Teachers, Over-seers and Rulers (as Scripture
 bids you) and yet to learn of them but what you
 list, or to deny them leave to teach or advise you
 further then they receive particular warrant and
 direction from your selves : Should our Assem-
 bly limit all their Ministeriall advice to the war-
 rant and directions of Parliament, and not ex-
 tend it to the warrant and directions of Christ ;
 would they not become the servnts and plea-
 sers of men ? If you do not your best to set up all
 the Government of Christ, even that in and pro-
 per to his Church, as well as that which is *over*
them

them and *for* them, men may well think, it is
 your own seats and not Christs that you would
 advance. I would all the Magistrates in *England*
 did well consider, that Christ hath been teach-
 ing them this seven years, that their own peace
 or honours shall not be set up before his Gospel
 and Government; and that they do but tire
 themselves in vain in such attempts; then they
 would learn to read my Text with the Vulgar,
Apprehendite disciplinam: And if the Decisive
 power of the Ministry be doubtfull, yet least
 they would set up their Nunciative in its vigor,
 Christ will rule *England*, either as subjects, or as
 Rebels: and all that Kings and States do gain
 by opposing his Rule, will not add one cubit
 to the stature of their greatness. Yet I do
 not understand by [the Government of
 Christ] a rigid conformity to the modell of
 this or that party or faction, with a violent ex-
 tirpation of every dissenter. It is the ignorant
 part of Divines (alas! such there are) who
 with the simple fellow in *Erasmus*, do expound
Paul's Hereticum hominem devita i.e. *de vitâ*
tolle. It is the essentials, and not the acciden-
 tals of Discipline that I speak of: And if some
 disengaged standers by be not mistaken (who
 have the advantage by standing out of the dust
 of contention) each party hath some of these
 essentials, and the worst is nearer the truth then
 his

his adversary is aware of: And were not the crowd and noise so great, that there is no hope of being heard, one would think it should be possible to reconcile them all: However, shall the work be undone, while each party striveth to have the doing of it? I was afraid when I read the begining and end of this controversie in *France*. The learned *Ramus* pleadeth for Popular Church-Government in the Synod; they rejected it as an unwarrantable novelty; the contention grew sharp, till the *Parisian* Massacre silenced the difference. And must our differences have so sharp a cure? will nothing unite disjoyned Christians, but their own blood? God forbid. But in the mean time while we quarrell, the work standeth still: some would have all the workers of iniquity now taken out of the Kingdom of Christ, forgetting that the Angels must take them out at last, *Mat. 13*. Some Ministers think as *Myconius* did when he was called to the Ministry by a Vision, leading him into a corn field and bidding him reap, he thought he must put in his sickle at the bottom, till he was told, *Domino meo non opus est stramine, modo aristæ in horrea colligantur*: My Master needeth not straw, gather but the eares and it shall suffice.

Once more: I know I speak not to the Parliament that should remedy it; but yet that
you

you may be helpfull in your places to advance
 this work of Christ, let me tell you what is the
 great thing in *England* that cries for Reforma-
 tion next our sins, even the fewness of Over-
 seers in great Congregations, which maketh
 the greatest part of Pastoral work to lie un-
 done, and none to watch over the people in
 private, because they are scarce sufficient for
 the publique work. It is pittie that *Musculus*,
 that may be head of a Society of Students if he
 will continue a Papist, must weave and dig for
 his living, if he will be a Protestant. It is pittie
 that even *Luthers* wife and children must wan-
 der destitute of maintenance when he is dead :
 When *Æsop* the Stage-player can leave his
 Son 150000.l. and *Roscius* have 30.l. a day for
 the same Trade ; and *Aristotle* be allowed 800.
 Talents to further his search into the secrets of
 nature : But am I pleading that Ministers may
 have more maintenance ? No, be it just or un-
 just, it is none of my errand. But oh that the
 Church had more Ministers, which though at
 the present they cannot have for want of men,
 yet hereafter they might have if it were not for
 want of maintenance : Alas then, what pittie
 is it that every Reformation should diminish
 the Churches Patrimony : If the men have of-
 fended, or if the office of Bishops or Deans
 be unwarrantable : yet what have the Reve-
nues

mes done ? Is it not pittie that one Troop of an hundred men, shall have seven commanding officers allowed them, besides others ; and 10000 or 40000 shall have but one or two Overseers allowed them for their souls ? when the Ministerial work is more laborious and of greater concernment, then the work of those Commanders ! I tell you again, The great thing that cries for Reformation in *England* next to sin, is the paucity of Ministers in great Congregations. I tell you this, that you may know which way to improve your several interests for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ in *England*.

To you Lawyers and Jurers, my advice is this, *Kiss the Son*. Remember the Judgement is Christs : every cause of Truth and Innocency doth he own, and will call it his Cause. Wo therefore to him that shall oppose it ! Remember every time you take a Fee to plead against a Cause that you know to be just , you take a Fee against a Cause of Christ : Will you be of counsel against him that is your Counsellor and King ? dare you plead against him, that you expect should plead for you ? or desire judgement (as the Jews) against your Lord and Judge ? Hath he not told you, that he will say, *In as much as ye did it to one of these little ones, ye did it unto me ?*
Remember

Remember therefore when a Fee is offered you against the Innocent, that it is a Fee against Christ: and Judas gain will be loss in the end, and will be too hot to hold long: you will be glad to bring it back, and glad if you could be well shut of it, and cry, *I have sinned in betraying the Cause of the Innocent.* Say not, It is our Calling that we must live upon: If any man of you dare upon such grounds plead a Cause against his Conscience, if his Conscience do not plead it again more sharply against him, say I am a false Prophet. If any therefore shall say of you, as the Cardinals of *Luther*, *Cur homini os non obstruitis auro & argento*, let the same answer serve turn, *Hem pecuniam non curat*, &c. If any Honourable or Worshipful friend must be pleased, enquire first whether he be a better friend then Christ: Tell him, the cause is Christs, and you cannot befriend him, except he can procure you a dispensation from him. When *Pompy* saw his souldiers ready to fly, he lay down in the passage, and told them, they should tread upon him then: which stopt their flight: So suppose every time you are drawn in to oppose a just Cause, that you saw Christ saying, Thou must trample upon me if thou do this: as *Luther* to *Melancton* *Ne Causa fidei sit sine fide*: so say I to you all, *Ne Causa justitie sit sine justitia.* When you begin to be cold in a
good